

**MINUTES**  
**SEX OFFENDER RESIDENCY BOARD**  
**Wednesday, March 11, 2015**  
**City Hall, Room 310**  
**2:30 p.m.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Dean Gerondale, Kathy De Cremer, Heidi Michel

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Renee Keehan, Ben Heiman

The meeting was called to order by Dean Gerondale.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Approval of the February 11, 2015 Minutes of the Sex Offender Residency Board meeting

Motion made by K. De Cremer to approve the February 11, 2015 Minutes, seconded by H. Michel. All in favor. Motion carried.

**2. APPEALS**

(a) Appeal of Jeremy Johnson requesting to move to 1207 Ninth Street

Jeremy appeared in person. D. Gerondale advised Jeremy of his right to discuss treatment issues in closed session and informed him not to use the names of the victims.

Jeremy appeared before the board in December and was approved at this address for 90 days, after which time he was to come to this meeting and provide documentation showing he is enrolled in a treatment program.

Jeremy provided a letter from the ATTIC indicating he is enrolled in SOT and attends every Thursday. So far he has attended two sessions out of twenty. The letter also indicates he is a low risk to reoffend.

A motion to APPROVE the appeal of Jeremy Johnson, address specific, was made by Heidi Michel, seconded by K. De Cremer. All in favor. Motion carried.

(b) Appeal of Steven Gittens requesting to move to 3480 Wiggins Way

Steven appeared in person. D. Gerondale advised Steven of his right to discuss treatment issues in closed session and informed him not to use the names of the victims.

Julie Rentmeester, Steven's girlfriend, appeared with Steven. Julie stated that Steven is deaf but he can read lips. She asked the board members to speak slowly.

Steven stated he has been living at this address since 2013. He was released from jail on December 16.

D. Gerondale asked Steven to tell them what happened. Steven stated he was convicted of child enticement. He responded to an ad on the computer and it was an undercover agent. He wasn't expecting to meet the person that day or expecting anything from it. It was something that should never have happened. He went to the Brown County Library in Ashwaubenon to see if the person was there, but he wasn't expecting her to show up.

Steven knew the girl was underage from the information she had on the computer. D. Gerondale asked why he went there if he knew the girl was underage. Steven stated he was at Paulsen's Hardware and needed to use a rest room, so went to the library. He admits he could have gone somewhere else, but he knew the librarian and wanted to tell her about his new life with Julie.

Steven again stated he wasn't expecting anything from what was said on the computer. It was a mixed up, unfortunate thing that happened. He would never have acted out on anything that was said. He and the victim did discuss meeting at the library. Steven knew that meeting her that day was wrong. To this day, he doesn't know why he did it. He was having a bad day.

H. Michel asked Steven what was said in the Internet. Steven stated he didn't really want to repeat it. However, Steven said the victim asked him some questions and he was telling her what she wanted to hear. The things he said were wrong and not appropriate. He knows he should have stopped talking to her when he realized she was 15 years old.

H. Michel asked Steven to explain why he was "having a bad day" that day. Steven stated he and Julie had a small argument and that was bothering him. He and Julie have now been dating about a year and a half. For the record, D. Gerondale asked Julie to give her name and address. She replied: Julie Rentmeester, 3480 Wiggins Way.

D. Gerondale asked Steven if he's seen the report from Brown County Human Services. Steven stated he has seen the report. D. Gerondale asked Steven what he has learned from the treatment program. Steven said he has learned to just walk away from a situation when he's upset. His anger issues have gotten better. He's learned to talk things out instead of getting angry.

Julie Rentmeester stated Steven is currently in treatment with Prevea. Steven said there is no time limit on how long he can go, but he plans on continuing with treatment. He stated it's nice to be able to go to someone else and talk about things he has on his mind.

Steven is not employed. He is legally disabled.

D. Gerondale asked Steven what else he does during the day time. Steven stated he helps take care of the house he's living in with Julie. He also has a hobby shop in the garage. He likes to build things and has been a builder most of his life. Now that it's springtime, he'll be working out in the yard a lot. He also does the cooking.

K. De Cremer asked Julie Rentmeester if she is employed. Julie stated she has been employed for 18 years and works four days a week. K. De Cremer asked about Steven being alone all day. Julie said Steven texts her quite often during the day.

H. Michel pointed out that one condition of Steven's probation is that he have no Internet access. She asked him if he has a computer at his house. Steven stated he does not. Julie has a computer but it is locked.

D. Gerondale reported that he received a phone call from a city council member stating that many members of this community were concerned about Steven living in their neighborhood.

H. Michel pointed out that one comment in the report from Prevea states that "Steven finds it difficult to complete things that are difficult and he does not understand." Steven feels this could be because of his hearing loss. Some people think he has ADD.

D. Gerondale asked Steven if he feels he's a risk to the community and would he do this again. Steven stated he would never do this again. It was a mistake and he believes with treatment and the medications he's on, this will never happen again. He's lost friends he's had for over 40 years. All he can do is move forward. Steven would even like to find a counselor he could go to once a week.

Steven asked if he could read a statement he typed up. He described his life with Julie, which included going to many family gatherings. They attend church services and recently had a priest come to visit them. They plan on having him back again. He would never hurt a child. He has a daughter of his own who is now 21 years old. They spend time together when she is not in school. He made a mistake which he has to live with the rest of his life. This mistake has cost him two friendships of nearly 40 years. The embarrassment has been overwhelming. He regrets what he's done. He wants to move forward and continue to follow through with his probation, counseling and beautiful relationship with his girlfriend, Julie.

David Bieda, 2853 Durham Road, is present today as a representative of the Red Smith Neighborhood Association. He is the Co-President. He stated this neighborhood has a lot of children between 0 and 15 years of age. They all have a "heightened concern" with Steven living here.

D. Gerondale asked Mr. Bieda if anything he's heard today has lessened his concern, or is it greater or the same? Mr. Bieda said it has not eased our concerns at all. This situation first came to his knowledge on Saturday. The board members spoke by

telephone to discuss it. They decided to have Mr. Bieda attend and then report back to them.

H. Michel asked Julie Rentmeester when Steven began living with her. She stated October 2013. Steven lived with her 10 months prior to the incident.

H. Michel asked Mr. Bieda if they had any issues prior to this. Mr. Bieda stated the only knowledge he had came to his attention on Saturday.

H. Michel is concerned that Steven has not had any sex offender treatment. He is 49 years old. How do they know it won't happen again without him having treatment? Steven stated he has been speaking with Joe, his parole officer, whom he sees once a week. Joe wanted Steven to get in a treatment program before coming before the board, but Steven hasn't heard any more from Joe about it.

D. Gerondale has the same concern regarding the lack of treatment. Steven has to be held to the same standards and other sexual offenders who come before the board, which is to have had some sort of treatment or be enrolled in treatment before they would grant residency within the city. To grant Steven even a temporary placement at this location, he should be enrolled in a sex offender treatment program. That's not the only thing the board looks at, but it is a primary concern because they have a responsibility to make sure the person understands what they did was wrong and how to avoid it in the future.

Steven asked the board where he can get treatment. D. Gerondale suggested the ATTIC; however, H. Michel thinks it would have to be a referral. H. Michel suggested Family Services through Jim Drake.

A motion to deny the appeal of Steven Gittens was made by K. De Cremer, seconded by D. Gerondale.

Discussion: Julie Rentmeester stated she does not know where Steven will go. He is on a blood thinner for an artificial valve, and had to have two units of blood. He's on many medications. He has to have his blood level checked every week. His parents live in Florida. He can't hear. She doesn't know what to do.

D. Gerondale understands but explained this board is not an elected board. They are just people in the community who try to do the right thing for the community as well as the offender. Steven's agent is the primary person to help him get into a treatment program. If he is denied today, that doesn't mean he can't come back and reapply to live here if he's in a treatment program. According to the ordinance, Steven can stay with Julie a few days, then go elsewhere for a night and then come back until he finds a permanent residence.

D. Gerondale stated that the board, in the past, has given a probationary period to allow the person to get into a program. Steven got out of jail 90 days ago, and D. Gerondale does not understand why his agent hasn't gotten him into a program. Julie Rentmeester stated they spoke to his agent right away but hasn't heard anything.

Steven filled out the paperwork. Julie asked if they would grant him the 30 days. D. Gerondale stated the board has to first vote on the pending motion. Two in favor, one opposed. H. Michel stated she opposed because she is willing to give Steven 30 days to get enrolled in a treatment program. She understands he has difficulty communicating, and has medical needs.

A motion to APPROVE the appeal of Steven Gittens, address specific, for a period of 30 days (until April 8, 2015) was made H. Michel, seconded by K. De Cremer. Two in favor, one opposed (Gerondale). Motion carried.

(c) Appeal of Russell D. Knaus requesting to move to 1176 Harvey Street

Russell appeared in person. D. Gerondale advised Russell of his right to discuss treatment issues in closed session and informed him not to use the names of the victims.

Russell stated he is currently homeless. D. Gerondale asked Russell to explain what happened.

Russell stated his wife told him she wanted a divorce. She gave him a ride to the liquor store where he bought some hard liquor. She then dropped him off at a park nearby where Russell sat for a couple hours and drank the liquor. During this time, a girl came up to him and asked for a piece of candy. He grabbed her hand and put it down his pants. Russell later passed out for the alcohol and later walked to a shelter. Two weeks later the police picked him up. This incident happened in 2007 and Russell served 5 years in prison. He was released in 2012.

Russell stated he is seeing Jim Drake twice a month and thinks he is a great counselor. Russell was told by Mr. Drake that he is doing well.

Russell worked at Pro Solutions for nine months and at a paper company for 3-1/2 months stacking boxes. He dropped over from heat stroke and had to quit because of all the meds he's on. He had two breakdowns, two days in a row, and then the friend he was staying with got kicked out of the apartment. Russell ended up sleeping on the street for a time. Russell is now on disability.

Russell is currently seeing a therapist. He felt he was living on borrowed time. If he drinks, it will kill him. He is receiving mental health treatment at Genesis in Oshkosh. The last time he had a drink of alcohol was seven months ago.

D. Gerondale asked Russell how he will be able to afford rent. Russell stated the apartment is only \$400 a month and he receives \$804 a month in disability payments. Russell is currently staying at the Arena Motel.

A motion to APPROVE the appeal of Russell Knaus, address specific, was made H. Michel, seconded by K. De Cremer. Discussion: D. Gerondale stated he would like to know how Russell is doing in the future and would like him to come back again.

Two in favor, one opposed (Gerondale). Motion carried.

- (d) Appeal of Lanard Hollenquest requesting to move to 1177 University Avenue

Lanard appeared in person. D. Gerondale advised Lanard of his right to discuss treatment issues in closed session and informed him not to use the names of the victims.

Lanard appeared before the board in 2011 and 2013 and was approved at locations near this one. D. Gerondale asked Lanard how things are going.

Lanard showed the board a picture of his five year old child. He stated he understands the logic behind the board and appreciated the opportunity to create a standard of life for himself and his family. He wouldn't do anything to jeopardize it. Within the next couple of years he would like to buy a home.

A motion to APPROVE the appeal of Lanard Hollenquest, address specific, was made K. De Cremer, seconded by H. Michel. All in favor. Motion carried.

- (e) Appeal of Jonathan Frantz requesting to move to 2224 Imperial Lane, Apt. 2

Jonathan appeared in person. D. Gerondale advised Jonathan of his right to discuss treatment issues in closed session and informed him not to use the names of the victims.

Jonathan appeared before the board in January and was approved to live at this address for 60 days. He is here today to provide treatment documentation.

Jonathan gave the board a letter from Mr. Cornelius stating he attends SOT every Wednesday and he has been actively participating in the group.

D. Gerondale asked Jonathan how things are going. Jonathan stated he is still employed through Seek at Wisconsin Plastics. Pioneer Metal wanted to hire him, but because of his record, ended his assignment.

Besides going to his meetings, Jonathan sees his mother and grandmother once a week. His grandmother always gives him advice to keep him going in the right direction. His mother wants the best for him. When he's not working, he watches movies or plays video games.

While in the program, Jonathan has learned what steps to take so as not to reoffend. Even small things can lead up to bigger mistakes. He's learned to change his way of thinking. In his group session, they talk about the different types of choices, such as emotional based decisions. Jonathan wants to avoid being in a meaningless relationship with a female. He can't see himself reoffending.

D. Gerondale believes Jonathan should continue with his treatment program. He is a little concerned that it's coming a little slow for him in terms of what things to avoid, but feels he can be committed to this and continue in the right direction.

A motion to APPROVE the appeal of Jonathan Frantz, address specific, for a period of 90 days (until June 10, 2015) was made D. Gerondale, seconded by K. De Cremer. All in favor. Motion carried.

(f) Appeal of James Woods requesting to move to 1666 Windsor Drive, Apt. 7

James appeared in person. D. Gerondale advised James of his right to discuss treatment issues in closed session and informed him not to use the names of the victims.

James has appeared before the board in the past and has been approved at a few different locations.

James stated he has been employed for six years at Manna for Life. He is now married. His wife is on disability and they were told he and his wife could move from the second floor to the first floor. Later, he was informed they were not accepting new leases.

A motion to APPROVE the appeal of James Woods, address specific, was made H. Michel, seconded by K. De Cremer. All in favor. Motion carried.

## REPORTS

Ann from Community Circles of Support appeared at the meeting. This is a program of Good Will which is a support group for people who have been recently incarcerated. They help them successfully transition back into the community. They have about a 97% success rate. Four years ago, they were given a contract under the Department of Corrections. They have groups in Green Bay, Fond du Lac, Neenah/Menasha, Appleton and Manitowoc. They are all volunteer based, some of whom have degrees in mental health counseling, worked for the Appleton Police Department, a retired CEO businessman and social workers.

In Green Bay, more and more are coming to them who have a sex offense. She came today to observe one of the meetings. The Community Circles of Support has some money to help with a person's basic needs.

Ann is impressed with the compassion and respectful way in which the board deals with the offenders. The hardest piece for her is how to deal with Green Bay's sex offender ordinance.

H. Michel stated she is familiar with her organization and has heard some very positive things about it. It's a wonderful program.

Ann did want to make it understood that Community Circles of Support does not advocate for an individual. They are a support system.

3. **NEXT MEETING DATE:** April 8, 2015 at 2:30 p.m.

The next meeting date of April 8, 2015 was confirmed.

A motion to adjourn was made by K. De Cremer, seconded by H. Michel. All in favor.  
Motion carried.