

**ALASKA CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION**

**Staff Notes and Meeting Summary July 8, 2015, 11:45 AM to 1:15 PM PM**

At the Atwood Conference Center, 550 W. 7th Avenue, 1st floor conference rooms, Anchorage

- Commissioners present: Alex Bryner (chair), Ron Taylor, Craig Richards,<sup>1</sup> Stephanie Rhoades, Trevor Stephens, Quinlan Steiner, Wes Keller, Brenda Stanfill, John Coghill,
- Commissioners on teleconference (t):<sup>2</sup>  
Kris Sell, Terry Vrabec, Jeff Jessee
- Commissioners absent: Greg Razo
- Participants present: John Skidmore, Dunnington Babb, Ken Truitt, Gail Sorenson (t), Tony Piper, Alysa Wooden, Phil Cole, Al Wall (t), Billy Houser, Dennis Schranz, Doreen Schenkenberger, Cathleen McLaughlin, Jordan Shilling, Leslie Hiebert, Pat Balardi, Kaci Schroeder (t), Andre Rosay, Brad Myrstol, Nancy Meade, Fred Dyson, Nora Morse, Steve Williams.
- Pew/JRI Staff present: Terry Schuster, Rachel Brushett, Leonard Engel, Emily Levett, Melissa Threadgill, Zoe Townes
- AJC Staff Present: Susanne DiPietro, Mary Geddes, Giulia Kaufman, Susie Dosik, Teri Carns, Brian Brossmer (new AJC staff member)

**Future Meetings: Monday, August 3 at 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM  
Atwood Conference Center, 1<sup>st</sup> floor.**

The meeting began at 12:00 PM. Staff attorney Mary Geddes introduced the Commissioners present. Chair Alex Bryner invited Terry Schuster and Rachel Brushett of Pew Charitable Trusts to begin the Justice Reinvestment presentation.

**Materials Provided:** See Mary Geddes’s email sent out 7/2/2015 (with agenda, prior meeting summary, Employment Subgroup summary and Ban the Box memo).

**Presentation (PEW Charitable Trust):**

The meeting opened at 11:45 AM. Commissioner Alexander Bryner chaired the meeting. He welcomed Pew presenters Terry Schuster and Dr. Rachel Brushett. The PEW presentation [is linked here](#). Brushett reviewed the Pew findings so far with respect to who occupies DOC beds. She indicated that they are still in the process of collecting and analyzing the CRC (halfway house) and EM populations but should be able to discuss those populations next time. Pew has not collected information as yet on community jails contracted by DOC in which inmates are housed in the short term. Commissioner Taylor is agreeable to providing that information.

---

<sup>1</sup> Attorney General Craig Richards has replaced Deputy Attorney General Rick Svobodny as a Commissioner.  
<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, this and other ACJC meetings on July 8 were plagued by technical difficulties with video and audio conferencing. Our apologies to remote attendees who were unable to hear or participate.

Schuster's presentation covered the national research concerning the relationship between crime and incarceration, the risk-needs-responsivity approach to offender assessment and rehabilitation; and how evidence based practices can reduce recidivism. Among the many topics was the successful substitution of 'rewards' (e.g. reduction of fines, earned credits) for compliance rather than sanctions for non-compliance. He mentioned Arizona which in 2008 allowed successful probationers 'credit' (allowing for the reduction of probation time).

Commissioner Taylor noted that the substance of the latter presentation was redundant of past research, analysis and efforts already underway in Alaska. Even so, the population was still growing. Commissioner Stanfill said she thought that 'getting the larger picture' about the relationship between crime rates and incarceration was useful. She did wonder about the reputed efficacy of community based supervision (as opposed to incarceration) in deterring some offenders such as drug dealers. Zoe Townes responded that there are many reasons for incarcerating, including incapacitation, but they do know that removing drug dealers as individuals from the market has zero impact on crime rates because other dealers simply step in, making things the same or worse. Schuster said that sanctioning individual offenders in the community may be more effective for them as individuals.

Susie Dosik noted that a lot of the evidence based strategies discussed in the presentation were post-sentence programs. Can sentencing be made more evidence based and therefore more effective? Len Engle from Pew agreed that a key element of the evidence based programming is the use of risk-needs assessment in determining appropriate levels and elements of supervision, but that a different set of factors have historically applied to sentencing. There are some courts that utilize assessment tools at sentencing, e.g. drug courts, but data pertains to successes on supervision not really the impact of sentencing. Melissa Threadgill from Pew noted that future research about finding 'the sweet spot' in sentencing length will transform the discussion as to the appropriate length of a sentence.

Commissioner Taylor noted that during his days at the Parole Board they acted to reform their own parole-setting process. They had too many parole conditions: 56 total! Technical assistance helped them reduce the number of standard conditions dramatically and the rest were individualized based on the LSI-R.

Commissioner Rhoades noted that Alaska needs ideas about what to do with our 'recycling' misdemeanor population.

Commissioner Stephens asked for the list of evidence based programs, especially for substance abuse. He noted a lack of community based programming in Ketchikan.

**Public Comment or Questions:** There were no public comments offered.

**Close of Meeting:**

Chair Byner, noting that the meeting had gone beyond the stated end time, ended the meeting at 1:21 PM.