

ALASKA CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION
Meeting Summary and Staff Notes from Thursday, October 15, 2015, 12:30– 2:30 PM

Atwood Conference Center, Room 102, 550 Seventh Avenue, Anchorage
Teleconference: 1-800-768-2983 Access Code: 5136755

1. WELCOME and INTRODUCTIONS --- Vice Co-Chair Jeff Jessee (5 minutes)

DiPietro opened the meeting at 12:30 pm; Jessee chaired the meeting.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Jeff Jessee, Trevor Stephens, Brenda Stanfill, Ron Taylor, Stephanie Rhoades, Quinlan Steiner, Greg Razo, Craig Richards, Wes Keller, Kris Sell, John Coghill (phone)

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Alex Bryner, Gary Folger (replacing Terry Vrabec)

STAFF:

Susanne DiPietro (AJC), Susie Dosik (AJC), Teri Carns (AJC), Giulia Kaufman (AJC- Notetaker), Terry Schuster (PEW), Emily Levett (PEW), Rachel Brushett (PEW), Melissa Threadgill (PEW), Sam Packard (PEW), Abby Walsh (PEW)

PUBLIC:

Carmen Gutierrez, Nancy Meade, Tony Piper, Ken Truitt, Jordan Schilling, Doreen Schenkenberger, Janet McCabe, Lacey Wilcox, Denali Daniels, John Skidmore, Tony Piper, Andre Rosay, Barbara Armstrong, (woman from Fairbanks)

2. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTION OF NEW CHAIR (5 minutes)

Bryner's term having expired in September, Sell put forward a motion to elect Razo as chair. The motion was seconded by Steiner. Richards stated that he feels the group needs strong leadership and encouraged Razo to provide that, especially considering the tight timeline; Razo agreed. The motion was brought to a vote. All present voting Commission members voted in favor (absent: Bryner, Folger). Razo thanked Commissioners and accepted the chairmanship. Jessee will continue to serve as vice chair.

3. JUSTICE REINVESTMENT INITIATIVE PROCESS –Pew PSPP Team (60 minutes)

a. "A"- SENTENCING (Razo):

Chair Bryner was absent. Razo gave a brief update about the group's last meeting (for more details please refer to meeting agenda/notes). Taylor pointed out that the chair of the parole board should be involved in the discussion, especially with regards to resumptive probation/parole. Stephens commented that he would like a status update on the Controlled Substances Advisory Committee by the next meeting. Jesse pointed out that it is important to get all stakeholders involved, especially with the tight timeline.

b. "B" -PRE-TRIAL (Chair Stephens):

Stephens provided the group with a brief update with the status on the pre-trial group (for more details please refer to meeting agenda/notes). Rhoades pointed out the importance of an effective pre-trial program around the state. She said establishing a good pre-trial program will involve money. Jesse stated that the Commission in cooperation with Pew will have to figure out how much it will cost to implement a statewide pre-trial program. Taylor expressed his concerns about the responsibilities and resources that will be put on DOC, if a pre-trial program is implemented, especially considering the 37,000 yearly admissions. Rhoades stated that there will be a layering effect of all the reforms implemented; as a result the total number of admissions should go down. Keller said it is important to know the price tag. Jessee stated that it is important to hash out as many details as possible in the subgroups before policy options are brought to the full Commission. He said that if details are unknown, proposals will be held up in the Commission and eventually in the Legislature. Further, he pointed out that the tighter a proposal is, the more support it can get and the more likely it is to pass. Richards expressed his

concerns about the tight meeting schedule for the pre-trial group and stated that he believes it is unrealistic. He suggested the group should potentially consider scheduling an additional meeting.

c. "C" COMMUNITY SUPERVISION (Chair Taylor):

Taylor provided a quick update on the community supervision group (for more details please refer to meeting agenda/notes). Among comments made, Taylor stressed the importance of the involvement of the parole board.

d. REPORT FROM VICTIMS ROUND-TABLE (Stanfill)

Stanfill referred to the victim round table report that was sent out by PEW (please see ATTACHED report for more details) summarizing concerns identified by victims round table discussions in Fairbanks and Bethel. It should be noted that many statewide victim advocacy organizations were invited to and present in Fairbanks. Stanfill said common concerns included the importance of prevention, the availability of victim services in rural areas (e.g., availability of rape kits), and the involvement of victims in the justice process. She stated that victims often feel ignored and that they would like see more sympathy from DOC. Taylor responded that they are trying to be sensitive to victims but there is also a public relations/media issue (he referred to the current EM coverage). Taylor pointed out that moving forward with the JRI process and the budget situation, it is important to develop a media strategy and to educate the public. Brenda continued and stated that victims have recognized criminalizing behavior is not the key to solving social issues; victims would like to see opportunities for behavioral change for offenders. Rhoades pointed out the importance of victim education, in tandem with Taylor's proposal for public education.

e. REINVESTMENT RECOMMENDATION (Schuster)

Schuster stated that Pew will help prepare the Commission's recommendations for release in December; the package of reforms will hopefully pass during the session. For any recommended reform, there has to be a plan for oversight and data collection and a plan for how a reform would be implemented. He referred to Threadgill who provided a brief overview of how the PEW policy package that recently passed in Utah is currently being implemented. Schuster reiterated that said that the Commission has to include a recommendation on how to implement new policies. He stated that one option would be to either implement a new body which would have oversight or to extend the life of the Commission as it currently stands. Rhoades said it would seem self-serving to recommend the continuation of the Commission. Richards stated he would like to see how effective and fruitful the work product of the group is before thinking about extending its life. Sell suggested leaving the decision up to the legislature. Jesse pointed out that the Commission could make a recommendation about the function and membership of the group that will have oversight over the implementation of the new policies rather than recommending the extension of the life of the Commission.

4. NEW BUSINESS

a. PROPOSAL FOR COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION FROM SENTENCING ALTERNATIVES WORKGROUP:

Skidmore presented the proposal and stated that there is consensus among Commission members, including DOL, on the new proposal. The new proposal states that the defendant is put on pre-conviction probation and if s/he successfully completes it, the conviction is never entered and the case is dismissed. The only remaining question is the issue of retroactivity and its associated costs. Rhoades said that according to ACS administration, it would be more cost-effective if defendants could file a request rather than a petition. Meade stated that ACS does not take a position on the recommended policy but pointed that, although requests would be cheaper than petitions, there would still be a fiscal impact on ACS. Because of unresolved concerns about costs related to and the benefits of including a retroactivity provision Commissioners decided that the question of retroactivity should be left to the Legislature. Stephens put forward the motion to forward the recommendation to the Legislature with the

addendum that the group is not in consensus about the issue of retroactivity and decided to leave it up to the Legislature to decide this issue; Stanfill seconded the motion. The motion was brought to a vote; all present voting Commission members voted in favor (absent: Bryner, Folger).

b. ANY OTHER NEW BUSINESS:

Taylor pointed out the importance of public education and outreach. Razo agreed and stated that he would like to see the Commission come up with a media strategy as there have been requests to go on the radio. DiPietro suggested that staff will schedule a meeting with Taylor and Razo to discuss how to move forward.

c. PUBLIC COMMENT:

n/a

5. ADJOURNMENT AT 2:30 PM

Jessee adjourned the meeting at 2:25 pm.