

CT Sentencing Commission

Meeting

Central Connecticut State University Bellin Room

Thursday, April 28th, 2011

2:00 – 4:00 PM

Members In Attendance: *Hon. Joseph Shortall (Chair), Michael Lawlor (OPM), Leo Arnone (DOC), Robert Farr (BOPP), Hon. David Borden, Hon. Robert Devlin, Reuben Bradford (DPS), William Carbone (CSSD), Michelle Cruz (Victim Advocate), Kevin Kane (Chief State's Attorney), Susan Pease (CSSU), Maureen Price-Boreland (CPA), Peter Gioia (CBIA), Hon. Patrick Carroll, David Shepack (State's Attorney), Patricia Rehmer (DMHAS), Vivien Blackford (CT Legal Services), Thomas Ullmann (Public Defender), John Santa (Santa Energy).*

MINUTES

I. MEETING CONVENED

Chair Shortall called the meeting to order at approximately 2:10 PM.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING OF FEBUARY 24TH, 2011

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes were **approved by a unanimous voice vote.**

III. REPORT OF THE CHAIR (Chair Shortall)

Chair Shortall began by stating that the main points of the second meeting were to first discuss goals, examine legislation, then set priorities, and to explore funding. He described how he appointed a research subcommittee, with Commissioner Pease as chair, and asked Commissioner Borden to chair a legislative working group with the goal of examining legislation for the 2012 legislative session. Minutes from both meetings were distributed.

Since the first Commission meeting, Chair Shortall spoke with numerous committee members about setting priorities and to find potential funding sources. In addition, the OPM has established a website for the commission, which the IMRP is assisting with - <http://www.ct.gov/opm/cwp/view.asp?a=2967&Q=476520>. Chair Shortall has taken steps to ensure compliance with the FOIA and the Sentencing Commission is now in full compliance.

Chair Shortall noted that there are a lot of legislative tasks that need to be addressed and he wanted to examine those issues with other members of the commission. He believed it was a productive meeting, and noted that Commissioner Ullmann asked about Pew Charitable Trusts funding, which may be possible. Commissioner Gioia and others noted that there is significant free assistance available including from Blum Shapiro. Commissioner Pease has also begun to receive responses from the deans of Connecticut law schools in reference to what assistance they may provide to the commission.

IV. REPORT OF THE RESEARCH SUBCOMMITTEE (Commissioner Pease)

The research subcommittee had its first meeting on March 25th at CCSU and was asked to contact the deans of the schools that pledged support to the Commission. The universities are able to provide faculty expertise and possibly graduate student aid. However, Commissioner Pease reported that they were dealing with a “chicken-egg” conundrum – they don’t know what to research and thus do not know what resources are needed, but they also don’t know what they can research without knowing what resources they have. She stated that the first step in resolving this is to gather information on what research has already been done.

The second task involved brainstorming to determine both what research and databases are available and where they are located, as well as a central location that would house such information. Commissioner Pease would like to know what data different agencies have so that it all can be put together for use. They should also consider creating a central file for faculty expertise from the different schools.

One of the ways that may also be possible for research to be conducted would be through support of outside faculty research. Faculty need to publish research for tenure; if different faculty members at the universities have research that is consistent with the areas that the commission is interested in, we should provide access to data and indirect support. It costs the commission nothing, but can be extremely beneficial. The next step once the priorities and goals of the commission are set, Commissioner Pease noted, should be to inform researchers and faculty about these intentions to allow faculty to apply for our aid. Secondary, the commission needs to set rules and regulations around accessing data. Chair Shortall reminded Commissioners that non-Commission members may join subcommittees, as well. If Commissioners believe non-Commission members would add value to a particular subcommittee, then they should submit the individual’s name to the chair of the subcommittee as well as Chair Shortall.

V. REPORT OF THE LEGISLATIVE WORK GROUP (Commissioner Borden)

At suggestion of Chair Shortall, the group met on April 6th and discussed which items could be presented to the 2012 legislative session to encourage continued funding. The group determined three short term items to focus on prior to the next legislative session.

Firstly, the commission could focus on the vast number of unclassified misdemeanors and felonies and work to identify as many as possible to bring into structure of penal code. Commissioner Farr has volunteered to take charge of that process and will continue to do so when he is no longer an official member of the Commission.

The second possibility rises out of a suggestion by Judge Keller via Commissioner Carbone: to identify a procedure for sentence modification for long-term prison sentences for juveniles tried in adult court. The concept is based on the recent Supreme Court decision involving constitutionality of life sentences for juveniles. Commissioner Carbone has taken charge of that.

The third possibility is to develop guidelines and standards around the pardon process. Mr. Andrew Clark will take charge of that. The next meeting is scheduled for May 5th; Commissioner Borden solicited additional suggestions.

VI. PRESENTATION OF ASSESSMENT OF CONNECTICUT'S CORRECTION, PAROLE AND PROBATIONS SYSTEMS (Brian Renstrom, Blum Shapiro)

Mr. Renstrom presented the assessment of Connecticut's Correction, Parole, and Probations systems that was also presented to the Criminal Justice Policy Advisory Council. Please see the Commission's website for PowerPoint presentation.

VII. PRESENTATION OF EXISTING AND FUTURE DATA RESOURCES, OBTS, CJIS, CISS (Sean Thakkar)

Mr. Thakkar presented on Connecticut's current Information Sharing System (CISS), Offender-Based Tracking System (OBTS) in addition to discussing CJIS' creation of CT Impaired Driver Information System (CIDRIS). For a PowerPoint of the presentation please visit the Commission's website.

VIII. CREATION OF SUBCOMMITTEES

Chair Shortall asked for a vote on the creation of the two subcommittees: legislative and research. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the motion was **approved by a unanimous voice vote.**

IX. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

Chair Shortall discussed the importance of having a Vice Chair and suggested Mr. Michael Lawlor for the position. Justice Borden nominated Mr. Lawlor, and Judge Carroll seconded the nomination. After being **approved by a unanimous voice vote** Mr. Lawlor was appointed Vice Chair of the Sentencing Commission.

X. COMMISSION MEETING OF JUNE 24, 2011: FOCUS GROUP

Chair Shortall will attempt to reschedule the next meeting for a Thursday instead of a Friday, however recognized that the CT Bar Association meeting will be held on the 23rd. He noted that he would like to see members of the commission discuss priorities in the next meeting, and believes that they have a wide scope and it is essential that priorities be set. Chair Shortall suggested a focus group process to elicit members' participation in identifying priorities.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

There is no other business of the Commission at this time.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at approximately 3:55 PM.