

CONNECTICUT SENTENCING COMMISSION

Full Commission Meeting

Thursday, January 26, 2012

2:00-4:30 p.m.

CCSU Student Center, Bellin Room

New Britain, CT

Members Present: *Hon. Joseph Shortall (Chair), Michael Lawlor (Vice Chair), Vivien Blackford, Reuben Bradford, William Carbone, Hon. Patrick Carroll, Michelle Cruz, John DeFeo (Representing Erika Tindill), Hon. Robert Devlin, Peter Gioia, Kevin Kane, Karl Lewis (Representing Leo Arnone), Tracey Meares, Mike Norko (Representing Patricia Rehmer), Mark Palmer, Susan Pease, Maureen Price-Boreland, John Santa, Susan Storey, Thomas Ullmann*

Members Absent: *Hon. David Borden, David Shepack, Hon. Gary White*

Also Participating: *Andrew Clark (Acting Executive Director), Jason DePatie*

Public Attendees: *Brian Austin, Ken Barone, Robert Farr, Deborah Fuller, Christine Gertsch, Aileen Keays, David Norman, Stacy Parnow, Chris Reinhart, Sarah Russell, Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, Sean Thakkar, Sarah White*

MINUTES

I. MEETING CONVENED

Judge Shortall called the meeting to order at approximately 2:15 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF NOVEMBER 10, 2011

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

III. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Sentencing Structure, Policy, & Practices Committee

Judge Devlin reported that the Sentencing Structure, Policy, and Practices Committee will be exploring the use of special parole for sex offenders. The committee's initial idea was to amend the sex offender statutes to allow for long-term probation when a sentence is 10 years or less. The need for this policy change is supported by recent evidence that supervision significantly curbs sex offenders' recidivism rates.

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B. Research, Measurement, & Evaluation Committee

Tom Ullmann reported the Research, Measurement, and Evaluation Committee is exploring the various research models that the Commission could adopt and expects to schedule a meeting in the next few weeks.

C. Recidivism Reduction Committee

Maureen Price-Boreland reported that the Recidivism Reduction Committee discussed its short, mid, and long-term goals. The committee agreed that a clear statutory charge could help the committee focus its efforts. It was decided that the next step in regard to the research questions was to request literature reviews for all three questions.

D. Steering Committee

Mike Lawlor reported that the Steering Committee wants to identify Connecticut's gaps in criminal justice data. It was suggested that Ivan Kuzyk be contacted because he knows what criminal justice data is currently available. There was consensus that a state-wide database would help the Commission with its future research endeavors. If the Commission receives funding, some funds could be allocated to operate an independent database.

Regarding the research questions, the committee decided it would be best to focus on specific problems and avoid larger ongoing academic studies given the Commission's resource constraints. Mike Lawlor suggested that the Commission use its resources (i.e. CCSU, Quinnipiac), to assist in this process.

The committee also continued discussion from August on the development of a "conflict of interest" policy.

E. Legislative Committee

There have been no recent meetings of the Legislative Committee.

1. "Certificates of Relief from Barriers"

The Provisional Pardon name was changed to either "certificate of employability" or "certificate of suitability for public housing." Both the Courts and Board of Pardons and Paroles could be authorized to issue certificates. Certificates could be issued at sentencing or during probation. Background information would be provided by probation's investigation and include the victim's input. The relief granted to the offender must be consistent with the victim's needs, public safety, and the nature of the employment or housing in question. The premise behind these certificates is that people should not be denied employment or housing due to a previous conviction.

There was consensus to refer this bill to the General Assembly for consideration.
Seventeen members assented, and Judge Carroll and Judge Devlin abstained.

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2. Juvenile Sentence Reconsideration

The Commission agreed on the basic concept of a bill but not on the details. A decision was made to recommend legislation be enacted to create a procedure whereby a person sentenced to a lengthy term of imprisonment for a crime committed when he/she was under the age of 18 will have a meaningful opportunity, after service of a portion of the sentence, to obtain release before the end of that term by demonstrating increased maturity and rehabilitation. Judge Carroll abstained.

In the meantime, it was agreed that meetings will be held to work out a compromise so that a Commission supported bill could be produced and considered by the Commission at its March 14th meeting. The Chair was directed to advise the legislature of the Commission's recommendation of the general principle, the major issues to be addressed in a statute, and the Commission's continuing effort to come up with a bill to be considered for the 2012 session.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE ANNUAL REPORT

Judge Devlin complimented Bob Farr for his work on the classifications. Andrew Clark recognized Jason DePatie for his hard work on the annual report. Quinnipiac was also thanked for their assistance with the legislative proposals. Upon a duly made and seconded motion, the report was **approved by a voice vote**. Abstaining was Judge Patrick Carroll.

V. APPROVAL OF 2012 MEETING SCHEDULE

The March 29, 2012 meeting was rescheduled for March 14, 2012. The other meeting dates are: June 28, 2012; September 20, 2012; and December 20, 2012. This meeting schedule was **approved by a unanimous vote**.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

It was discussed that the concept of "consensus" needs to be clarified; it was referred to the Steering Committee for a recommendation.

VII. MEETING ADJOURNED

Meeting adjourned at approximately 4:30 p.m.