

CRIMINAL JUSTICE POLICY ADVISORY COMMISSION (CJPAC)
MINUTES
FOR
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2011 MEETING

**I. Welcoming Remarks – Chairman Mike Lawlor, Under Secretary of
Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division, OPM**

CJPAC Chair Mike Lawler noted that the CJPAC has provided opportunities for the agencies to work collaboratively in addressing system reform. He provided a brief overview of the state’s budget crisis and noted that the Governor’s Budget will involve difficult decisions requiring the state to do “a lot more, with a lot less”. The state agencies will need to identify savings and re-allocate resources.

Chair Lawlor explained that the main driver of the criminal justice system costs – prison population – has begun to decline. On Jan 1st, there was a ten-year low in the “sentenced” prison population. However, the “pre-trial” prison population is increasing. And, violence in large cities is on the rise. There are several policy initiatives under development to help reduce and control the overall prison population.

There is a serious backlog of unprocessed cases at the Department of Public Safety Forensic Laboratory. The number of cases submitted to the DPS Lab has increased dramatically over the past few years due, in part, to greater awareness of forensic technology capability. However, the Lab does not have adequate number of lab scientist to handle the caseload. The Lab “backlog” is also contributing to a “backlog” of courts cases as well as “backlog” in cases at local police departments.

Chair Lawlor described the purpose and structure of the new Sentencing Commission. OPM recently applied for a competitive grant from the USDOJ to support a Justice Reinvestment Initiative. Mr. Lawlor noted that the business community is collaborating with the state agencies to identify ways to reduce the cost of the criminal justice system while continuing to ensure public safety.

II. Introductions/minutes

The CJPAC members approved the minutes from the December 2010 meeting.

III. First presentation by BlumShapiro

Summarized the findings and recommendations in their Connecticut Regional Institute for the 21st Century Assessment of Connecticut's Correction, Parole and Probation System, July, 2010 report.

IV. Greetings by Governor Dannel P. Malloy

Governor Malloy noted that it was imperative to reduce crime and recidivism in Connecticut. Governor Malloy emphasized the need to focus the criminal justice system on early interventions and positive outcomes for offenders and victims. The Governor expressed the need to devote ourselves to build a better system of counsel, supervision, and care that prevents recidivism, as well as preventing anti-social behavior. The importance of this body, he said, is very much in building the system described.

V. Second Presentation by William Carbone, Executive Director of Court Support Services Division

Mr. Carbone described his agency's commitment to achieving savings related to prison costs. He noted that there was a need to balance public safety along with the offenders' need for intensive supervision while addressing victims' concerns.

He described CSSD's Probation Transition Program, with a 25:1 caseload, priority treatment access, and enhanced training. The program had shown significant reductions (15% in pilot groups, 26% in comparison group), and the percentage of technical violators going to prison was reduced. Mr. Carbone described the need to create intensive probation supervision units, as well as improve ways to screen and id defendants and inmates in collaboration with DOC, Public Defenders, and other agencies. He also emphasized the need to provide offenders

with access to basic treatment, medical, employment, substance abuse counseling.

Mr. Carbone described several initiatives to help reduce the prison population and control system-wide costs; including policy changes related to pretrial defendants waiting for residential treatment; plea agreement of 2 years or less prison time; incarcerated offenders serving 2 year or less. Mr. Carbone noted that these types of initiatives require changes in legislation and additional funding as well as continued collaboration and cooperation between the criminal justice agencies.

VII: Agency Updates

Robert Farr, Chairman, Boards of Pardon and Paroles

Mr. Farr noted that the agency is moving forward with expanding the functionality of the “Case Notes Information System”. The agency has been designated by National Parole Resource Center as a site for training on evidence-based practices. BOPP is receiving most of the police reports however, approximately one third of the police reports are not received.

Susan Storey, Chief Public Defender

Ms. Storey explained the new federal grant funded domestic violence initiative in New Haven and Bridgeport. Attorney Storey noted that alcohol and drug abuses are serious challenges to offenders requiring additional social work services. The New Haven initiative has a new veterans’ administration liaison so issues with veterans may be addressed after being charged with crime.

Joette Katz, Commissioner, Department of Children and Families

Judge Katz described the ongoing re-organization of DCF. She noted the need to enhance communication within intra and inter agency work, and explained that some of the restructuring will require legislation as well as new policies. She made note of confidentiality and communication issues within the agency and described a new initiative to measure the agency’s performance.

Dennis Murphy, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Labor

Mr. Murphy noted his department needs to consider how to better integrate it’s programs with the larger issues of CJPAC. He emphasized

the STRIKE program, and explained that it is still dependent on economic conditions.

James Thomas, Acting Commissioner, Department of Public Safety.

Mr. Thomas emphasized that law enforcement agencies need to develop stronger partnerships and collaborations with the education agencies and other criminal justice related groups. He described the challenges associated with the backlog of cases at the DPS Forensic Lab.

Leo Arnone, Commissioner of Department of Corrections

Mr. Arnone discussed DOC's existing prison release programs and impact of changes in release policies as related to the prison population and parole services. Mr. Arnone also described two new federal funded re-entry programs based in New Haven and Hartford. Both sites are outcome-based programs yet each has different components and structure. DOC is moving forward with designing and implementing a new modern information management system.

Kevin Kane, Chief States Attorney

Mr. Kane noted that the agencies have developed information sharing systems since the Cheshire tragedy. He emphasized the need to reduce the backlog at the DPS lab given that there are hundreds of unsolved homicides. Mr. Kane noted that a relatively small number of people were causing disproportionate amount of damage in the state.

Judge Barbara Quinn, Chief Court Administrator, Judicial Branch

Judge Quinn described the development of a new e-citation pilot, as well as a new victim and interested party site to provide court information. She would like to expand the range of "on-line" services and information available to the public and criminal justice professionals. Judge Quinn discussed how the new video hearing equipment is helping the Branch to reduce costs for personnel and transportation.

William Carbone, Executive Director, Court Support Services Division

Mr. Carbone explained the Enfield Project, and relayed concerns about pretrial population. He also reported on the new pilot program sited in Enfield which conducts bond recommendations via phone.

VIII: OPM Data reports by Chairman Mike Lawlor

Mr. Lawlor anticipated that state prison populations will continue to decline at a moderate rate, barring unforeseen events. He also anticipated that there will be measureable declines in recidivism rates. He encouraged efforts to involve as many agencies as possible in substance abuse reductions, as well as a need for administrative form standardization, which no state has ever achieved. If a single form within agencies meets multiple criteria, it can be used for both purposes. He related the concept to federal and state privacy laws.

VIII: Other Business

The next meeting of CJPAC will occur in March.

X: Adjournment