

MINUTES
GOVERNOR'S SENTENCING AND PAROLE REVIEW TASK FORCE
Friday, October 5, 2007
Room 1C, LOB

Members Present: Brian Austin, Maureen Price-Boreland, William Carbone, Linda Cimino, Eric Crawford, John Danaher, Robert Farr, Thomas Flaherty, Mary Galvin, Lisa Holden, Kevin Kane, James Kenny, Thomas Kirk, MaryAnne O'Neill, Judge Barbara Quinn, Judge Thomas West

Members Absent: Susan Storey, Commissioner Theresa Lantz, Ana Alfaro, Lisa McDonald.

Others Present: Frederick Levesque (Representing Commissioner Theresa Lantz),
Rich Sparaco, Thomas White, Thomas Hogan, Brian Hill

Welcome and Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m., by Lisa Holden Co-chair. Co-chairs Mary Galvin and Judge Thomas West were also in attendance.

Committee Membership Update. Lisa Holden announced that David Blackwell has resigned from his position on the committee.

Court Support Services Division (CSSD) Presentation

William Carbone, Executive Director of the Court Support Services Division of the Connecticut Judicial Branch gave a brief overview of the division's functions and responsibilities. He then introduced Thomas White and Thomas Hogan who provided an in-depth PowerPoint presentation of the challenges facing the Judicial Branch concerning probation supervision. The presentation, surrounding discussion and follow up questions and answers from task force members revolved around risk assessment, treatment and services, recidivism and the like.

The task force members also discussed the two-year effort to select and execute supervision assessment tools (Levels of Service of Inventory and Adult Substance Use Survey). Numerous task force members asked questions regarding the methodology for selecting and fine-tuning these tools. A copy of the division's PowerPoint presentation is attached.

Thomas White and Brian Hill, Research Director of CSSD, spoke specifically to the five strategic points of the two tools and commented that their implementation was still "a work in progress". The tools are based on research findings, predicted recidivism levels,

crimogenic needs and evidence-based treatment. The tools are used as overall guides, with each application customized for an offender.

Thomas Hogan stated his belief that the principles underlying the tools will be successful more times than not in terms of offenders - risk assessment as a key component.

James Kenny spoke to the issue of the risk of recidivism and asked about how low versus high risk re-offenders were classified.

Co-chair Mary Galvin asked how risk assessment tools were applied and asked if all on probation were so assessed. James Kenny inquired about the frequency of assessment (annually, bi-annually, etc.).

Thomas Flaherty noted that risk assessment tools are merely a guide, stating that law enforcement officers could/should use their own judgment to override tools. William Carbone and Thomas White reiterated that the tools serve as a “predictor” of behavior and actions but are not resolute.

Co-chair Mary Galvin stressed the need for proper and professional training of probation officers. Discussions then ensued between several task force members about split sentences, re-arrest, recidivisms for other offenses, risk assessment for juvenile offenders and offender services, particularly as they relate to familiar friends support systems.

A break was called at 11:30 a.m.

The meeting reconvened at 11:53 a.m.

Mr. Carbone spoke of the statistics surrounding violation of probation- 6,500 warrants have not yet been served and supervision ends when a warrant has been signed. He also said the outstanding warrant situation definitely needs to be addressed.

Thomas White questioned what happens after a warrant is served- do offenders remain off probation until there is a disposition? He also wondered what percentage of offenders are rearrested while on bond and without supervision.

Board of Pardons and Paroles Presentation. Rick Sparaco of the Connecticut Board of Pardons and Parole then provided a PowerPoint presentation on the board’s risk assessment measure (Salient Factor Score). A copy of the PowerPoint presentation is attached.

Co-chair Linda Holden noted the volume of paperwork now being directed to Board of Pardons and Parole. Co-chair Mary Galvin asked what other states Connecticut has or will look to to develop a decision-making tool, particularly in terms of risk assessment. She also strongly stressed that members of the Board of Pardons and Parole need proper training in that the risk assessment was just one tool of many that should be used in decision – making.

Members James Kenny, Kevin Kane and Robert Farr then discussed a variety of issues, including: having law enforcement officers present at parole hearings; notification standards for parole hearings, etc.

Chief State's Attorney Kevin Kane then provided a brief overview about parole eligibility and offender accountability. Robert Farr then discussed the aspect of parole eligibility and maintenance (employment, sponsor, etc).

It was noted that future meeting dates and times as well as PowerPoint presentations would be posted on the web site <http://www.ct.gov/opm/criminaljustice/governortaskforce>

The next meeting will be held on October 25, 2007 at 1:00 p.m. in Room 1B of the Legislative Office Building.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Avarista
Office of Policy and Management