

MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
Governor's Sentencing and Parole Review Task Force  
Monday, December 10, 2007  
Room 1B, LOB

**Members Present:** Ana G. Alfaro, Brian Austin, Maureen Price-Boreland, William Carbone, Judge Patrick Carroll( for Judge Barbara Quinn), Linda Cimino, Eric Crawford, , John Danaher, Robert Farr, Thomas Flaherty, Mary Galvin, Lisa Holden, Kevin Kane, James Kenny ,Thomas Kirk, Theresa Lantz, Lisa MacDonald, MaryAnne O'Neill, Karen Goodrow (for Susan Storey), Judge Thomas West

**The Meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m., by Lisa Holden, Co-chair.**

**First to Present:** Thomas White, Court Support Services Division, (CSSD)  
Mr. White spoke of Offender Re-entry and improving public safety. The probation areas of focus are manageable caseloads, programs/treatment and warrant services. There are approximately 57,000 offenders serving a term of probation, 11,500 split sentence cases currently under probation, In 2006 5,400 offenders were placed on probation immediately following a period of incarceration. Research continues to demonstrate the importance of continuing supervision and treatment after an offender leaves prison in reducing recidivism. Manageable caseloads when coupled with quality client engagement and evidence-based treatment have been correlated with reductions in recidivism. Mr. White stated that a manageable caseload is determined by: who the probationer is; what we are asking our officers to do with the probationer: what we hope to accomplish. Currently warrants served annually are 8,977. Present un-served warrants are 6,228. Seventy percent of those warrants are more than one year old. There is extensive field investigation required for many warrants. Mr. White presented some public safety strategies. Reduce probation caseloads, increase targeted treatment and specialized services and improve warrant services. Some of the committee members asked questions pertaining to, what an appropriate caseload size would be, if officers while serving these warrants would be trained and armed to protect themselves, and to make sure the proper release plan is in place before a parolee is discharged back into the community. Please see PowerPoint attached.

**Second to Present:** Suzanne Niedzielska, Department of Information Technology (DoIT).  
Ms. Niedzielska spoke of CJIS program vision. She stated that the Criminal Justice Information Systems will provide the policy and informational framework within which to build and maintain a fully-integrated criminal justice community whose organizational efficiency and combined ability to render quality decisions throughout every aspect of the criminal justice system will continually improve public safety and aid sound policy decisions. Some of the goals she spoke of included, broadening the CJIS Governing Board's structure and mandate to allow CJIS to develop a fully coordinated system that meets the diverse needs of it's users, CJIS must continually define it's users and determine their informational needs, develop and maintain long-term sustainable funding for the CJIS program. Please see PowerPoint attached.

**Third to Present:** Suzanne Quinlin, Family in Crisis.

Ms. Quinlin discussed the incarceration of certain offenders and the effects it has on their families. There are over 2 million children that have at least one of their parents incarcerated. This particular data is not tracked in Connecticut and other states. Without any intervention a large percent of these children will follow the path of their parent. It would be better to have some intervention then to allow these children to slip through the system. Attorney Story stated that it seemed when the mother is the one to be incarcerated that the children are less likely to visit her in prison versus the father, reason being that generally the mother is the custodial parent and she would be the one to bring the children to visit their father more so then the father taking them to visit the mother. The goal is to put into place a comprehensive plan of service; all cases are different and should be handled separately.

**Fourth to Present:** Commissioner Thomas Kirk, Department of Mental Health Addiction Services, (DMHAS).

Michael Norko MD, Director of Forensic Services, (DMHAS), spoke of mental illness and Violence. Public perceptions include discrimination and stigma associated with mental illness largely stem from the link between mental illness and violence in the minds of the general public. Proportions of Americans who describe mental illness in terms of violent behavior nearly doubled between 1950 and 1996. Media portrayals contribute significantly to this view. In a 12 month period 18% of Americans suffer anxiety disorder, 9.5% suffer mood swings, 3.8% substance use disorder. Many studies demonstrate statistical correlations between violence and various mental disorders and various symptoms of mental disorder. Substance abuse consistently correlated strongly with violence in research studies.

Loel Meckel, (LCSW), Assistant Director of Forensic Services had discussed some key points of intervention across the criminal justice system. US jail/prisons contain many with serious mental illness (most with co-occurring addictions) and minor charges DMHAS has extensive collaboration with criminal justice to develop community services for diversion and re-entry, Appropriate services reduce incarceration and recidivism, cost less than incarceration, and free up DOC beds for serious offenders.

Patrick Fox MD, Director of Whiting Forensic Division of Connecticut Valley Hospital (DMHAS). Mr. Fox discussed the The Whiting role in Forensic Services and Risk Management. The Whiting Forensic Division of Connecticut Valley Hospital currently has 106 Maximum Security beds and 141 Enhanced Security beds. Treatments offered are, initial assessment, diagnostic evaluation, psychological evaluation, suicide assessment, risk management, psychosocial assessment, and rehabilitation assessment. Mr. Meckel also discussed the discharge planning and coordination.

Paul Thomas Amble MD, Chief Forensic Psychiatrist Division of Forensic Services (DMHAS). Mr. Amble spoke of risk assessment. Some community risk assessment consultations are; assure a safe and viable treatment plan for DMHAS clients in the

community, understand needs/triggers, manage risk factors: housing: medical compliance: substance abuse. Please see PowerPoint attached.

**Fifth to Present:** Celia Siefert, Judicial Branch (CMIS), spoke of case management information systems (CMIS) and other technology solutions, adult probation focus. CMIS and its interfaces, there are 65,000 bail interviews in a year. 200 Officers have wireless access to their laptops if they need to access client profile, history, and new addresses. CMIS contains case information, data sent from motor vehicle system, risk tools. Please see PowerPoint presentation attached.

**Recommendations:** MaryAnne O'Neill has asked that all recommendations be sent to her and they will be then distributed to the task force members.

**Next Meeting:** December 19, 2007, Rm. 1B, LOB, 1:00a.m.-5:00p.m.

**Meeting was adjourned at 1:41p.m.**