

Meeting Minutes

July 12, 2021

2:00 – 3:30

Virtual Meeting via WebEx

Commission members in attendance: Justice Lubbie Harper, Jr. (Chair), Carleton Giles (BOPP), Gail Hardy (DCJ), Monica Rams (DCF), Scott Jones (President Pro Temp of Senate), Preston Tisdale (Governor), Sharon Cheeks (Governor), Avery Gaddis (Appointee of Minority Leader of the Senate), Hakima Bey-Coon (OVA), Werner Oyanadel (CWCSEO), Denise Drummond (CWCSEO), Patrick Ridenhour (Representative of the Municipal Police Chiefs), Cheryl Sharp (CHRO).

Non-commission members in attendance: Deb Fuller (Judicial/CSSD), Troy Brown (Judicial/CSSD), Aileen Keays (IMRP).

I. Welcome

- a. Meeting commenced at approximately 2:09pm

II. Review and approve minutes from May meeting

- a. Commissioner Giles moved to approve, seconded by Preston Tisdale, approved unanimously via voice vote.

III. Updates on other commissions, committees and task forces

- a. *Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (JJPOC) – Judicial/CSSD*

- a. JJPOC RED Workgroup Update – Judicial/CSSD

- i. Some provisions passed but it was paired down.
 - ii. There was a big interest in juvenile justice and now there is renewed interest. Fortunately, it appears they will not have a special session to address it but do plan to do something.
 - iii. Minimum age of jurisdiction was raised from 7 to 10. Advocates wanted 12 but 10 was the compromise. Below that age now cannot come to juvenile court.
 - iv. A lot of efforts for mandatory diversion before juveniles can come into court. There has been ongoing work with this at CSSD and other offices. This was put into the bill.
 - v. Responsibility for housing under 18-year-olds for cases being heard in adult court is returning to Judicial. For about 15 years, those kids were? transferred to DCF custody and were? held at Mansion. Now will return to Judicial and held in its facilities. Need a report submitted by next January.

- b. [*Racial Profiling Prohibition Project*](#) (CTRP3) – IMRP

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- a. Released a report on racial disparities in the Wethersfield Police Department in June. It can be found on CTRP3's website: www.ctrp3.org. CTRP3 plans to release the full 2019 traffic stop report next month.
- c. *CT Sentencing Commission* (CSC) – IMRP
 - a. CSC had a productive legislative session
 - i. [*HB 6594, An Act Concerning the Criminal Justice Process*](#). This omnibus bill contains recommendations from the Division of Criminal Justice, the Office of Chief Public Defender, and the Sentencing Commission. Sections 25-27 contain the Commission's recommendations to amend the state's "drug-free zone statutes." These sections would decrease the zones from 1,500 feet to 200 feet measured from the perimeter of the property and would codify current case law requiring that the accused person intended to sell in a zone in order to receive the enhanced sentence. Section 28 contains the Commission's recommendation to expand eligibility for sentence modification, a process that gives judges discretion to re-evaluate and modify a criminal sentence. The bill was passed by the House unanimously, and by the Senate with a vote of 32-3.
 - ii. [*SB 1019, An Act Concerning the Board of Pardons and Paroles, Erasure of Criminal Records for Certain Misdemeanor and Felony Offenses, Prohibiting Discrimination based on Erased Criminal History Record Information and Concerning the Recommendations of the Connecticut Sentencing Commission with Respect to Misdemeanor Sentences*](#), deals with several issues including automatic erasure of certain records. Section 35 is based on the Commission's recommendation to reduce the maximum penalty for misdemeanors by one day to a 364-day sentence. This proposal supported by the Commission in the last three years, arose from work done in collaboration with the Connecticut Immigrant Rights Alliance and the Yale Law School Worker and Immigrant Rights Advocacy Clinic. Section 38 would better align Connecticut's classification of offenses with the classification scheme used in federal immigration laws and regulations. This alignment of definitions is important given the heavy immigration consequences associated with how federal immigration law classifies criminal offenses. The bill has been passed by the Senate, the House and is now signed by the Governor.

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- iii. The Commission's proposals to reform the sex offender registry and to expand voting rights of incarcerated individuals were not raised by the General Assembly this session.
- b. Going forward, there are several ongoing projects:
 - i. Mental Health Study per [Sen. Osten's request](#). We have recently received the diagnosis data from the Department of Correction and will be producing a memo with additional analysis to update our memo of June of 2020.
 - ii. Disparities study per [Special Act No. 19-17](#). We have received data from the Judicial Branch Court Operations and the Court Support Services Division but are still working to collect data from the Department of Correction in order to conduct further analysis.
 - iii. Animal Cruelty Study. [SB 923, An Act Concerning Review of Animal Cruelty Laws by the Connecticut](#), was passed by the Senate on consent calendar, but was not brought up by the House. We will look for direction from the legislature before proceeding with the study.
 - iv. Sex Offender Registry. The Commission has worked for several years on proposals to modify how the state handles individuals convicted of sex offences. One such proposal involves transitioning the system from an offense-based system to risk-based. The prior failed bills have involved several proposed changes; the CSC is considering the possibility of amending its previous proposal to focus on the removal mechanism.
 - v. The Collateral Consequences Subcommittee will resume its meetings soon.
- c. [A study of a non-monetary pretrial justice system](#). Sen. Looney has requested that the Commission develop a proposal to reduce the detained pretrial population and to eliminate money bail as a detention mechanism. At this point it appears that there is no agreement on what a no-money bail system should look like. We are writing a report that looks at best practices, developments in other jurisdictions and litigation efforts around the country.
- a. [Police Transparency and Accountability Task Force](#) (PTATF) – IMRP
 - i. Next full meeting tomorrow, 1pm. Will be on CT-N. Discussion and possible vote on Primary/Secondary Traffic Stop Proposal
 - 1. Also a general discussion on Hearst Connecticut Media [report](#) on CT police disciplinary records
 - ii. Subcommittees continue to work on remaining charges of Task Force with goal to have proposals ready for vote in the full Task Force by early fall, to be coupled with public forums on the proposals.

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- iii. Next two meetings: Tuesday, August 10, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. (Virtual) and Tuesday, September 14, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. (In-Person)
- iv. More info at www.ctpolicetransparency.com

IV. National conference National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts

- a. Justice Harper invited to present
- b. This Commission's work seems to be in-line with national efforts. What was most interesting to Justice Harper was the prominent theme "the house is on fire"; that states need judicial reform. The nature and culture of policing was also specifically discussed and promotes the value of our planned conference.

V. Conference planning

- a. Conference planning committee has been meeting. Identified a long list of potential topics for discussion and then narrowed that list down to the key areas we are interested in exploring and highlighting. Aileen will share that list with membership. Please send suggestions for speakers, and any thoughts on topics, to Aileen.
- b. Looking for a venue that will commit to a hybrid event (in-person and virtual)
 - i. If Universities are hesitant to commit to a large in-person event, CREDCJS could consider the Convention Center, hotels including Marriott in Hartford, the one near the prosecutor's office in Rocky Hill, or the Omni Hotel in New Haven. Could also look into Rentschler Field, Dunkin Donuts park, Yale University (maybe the West Haven campus), or 165 Capitol Ave where OEC is located in Hartford, which would be free.

VI. Other business

- a. None

VII. Meeting adjournment

- a. Meeting was adjourned at 2:46pm