

Commission on Racial & Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System

Connecticut Judicial Branch

Meeting Minutes

July 13, 2020

2:00 – 3:30

Virtual Meeting via WebEx

Commission members in attendance: Justice Lubbie Harper, Jr. (Chair), Hakima Bey-Coon (OVA), Scott Jones (President Pro Tempore of the Senate), Chief Patrick Ridenhour (CT Police Chiefs Association), Preston Tisdale (Governor), Carleton Giles (BOPP), Monica Rams (DCF), Cheryl Sharp (CEO), Alex Tsarkov (House Majority Leader), Werner Oyandel (CEO), Marlon Drummond (DESPP)

Others present: Deb Fuller (Judicial-CSSD), Troy Brown (Judicial-CSSD), Aileen Keays (contractor – IMRP), Brittany Kane (contractor – IMRP)

I. Welcome

- a. Meeting commenced at approximately 2:08pm

II. Review and approve minutes from May 11th meeting

- a. Tabled until the Sept meeting

III. Updates on other commissions, committees and task forces

- a. *Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (JJPOC) – Judicial/CSSD*
 - a. CSG was engaged by CT to perform comprehensive eval of JJ system and ID gaps of where it can be strengthened. Will result in implementation plan with deliverables and time frames. Big focus on diversion and Youth Service Bureau system. Want to keep the system small. IOU task force meeting July 21st and will adopt recommendations
- b. [Racial Profiling Prohibition Project \(CTRP3\) – IMRP](#)
 - a. CTRP3 last met in May. Will meet again in August to discuss 2019 preliminary findings.
- c. [CT Sentencing Commission \(CSC\) – IMRP](#)
 - d. Voting – continuing discussion on making voting more accessible to the eligible incarcerated individuals in the 2020 election and going forward. Also discussing the concept of restoration of voting rights to all incarcerated individuals
 - e. Working to expand the compassionate parole statutory eligibility
 - f. Discussing various sentencing reforms
 - g. Ongoing studies on disparities, mental health at the request of Sen Osten. Still trying to gain access to the data to perform the disparity study from Court Ops, CSSD and others.
 - h. Ongoing work on bail to try to come up with a proposal per Sen. Looney’s request to reduce the pretrial population and eliminate money bail as a detention mechanism

V. Commission statement in response to George Floyd homicide

- Commission is preparing a public statement as well as a letter to the Governor to highlight the work of the Commission and request funding from the state.

Commission members asked for points they think should be made

- Public statement
- Governor
 - Very strong legislation mandated the commission but with no funding. This is an opportunity for the state to commit to the goals of the statutory mandate. The commission had to request a reduced mandate because without funding, it was impossible to adhere to.

VI. National Consortium on Racial and Ethnic Fairness in the Courts membership

- National group that hosts several conferences/events. Each state which has a commission such as ours is included as a member, however, this commission was not. Justice Harper submitted a request and this Commission has now become a member of the National Consortium.

VII. Other business

- Abby Anderson of JJPAC will be resigning her position in the coming months.
- Police Accountability and Transparency Task Force is proposing several changes and many of them have been advocated for by this Commission for several years. This Commission might want to publicly support the recommendations. Deb will send the link. Chief Ridenhour said that about 90% of the recommendations are already included in departmental policies, however, the remaining items may have some objection by the union. In spite, Chief Ridenhour is comfortable with the commission supporting the recommendations should it choose to. When this Commission expresses support, it should reference the work CT has already done as it is ahead of the game when compared to other states.
 - Will create a statement of support for these recommendations. Send to Commission members first.
- A recent ABA event showcased the film “Justice on Trial” followed by a panel discussion with several film stars. Troy Brown moderated the panel. Film was trying to force the conversation on racism, systemic racism, reparations, slavery, Jim Crowe, police brutality, prison reform, Black Lives Matter.

VIII. Meeting adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 2:34pm

2020 Meeting Schedule

January 13th
March 9th
May 11th
July 13th
September 14th
November 9th