

Reentry Advisory Council and Workforce Development Meeting Minutes

COUNCIL MEETING – Thursday, July 9, 2015

The meeting was called to order 9:45 a.m. at DPS&C Headquarters in Baton Rouge.

Welcome, Introduction and Determination of Quorum:

Attendees Present:

Assistant Secretary Rhett Covington, Dept. of Public Safety & Corrections,
Designee for Secretary Le Blanc, La DPS&C
Sheriff Mike Cazes, La Sheriff's Association
Sue Austin, La Department of Health and Hospital
Dan Krutz, La Chaplain's Association
Louis Reine, AFL-CIO
Dr. Slocum, Designee for Curt Eysink, Executive Director
Joseph Ardoin, LA State Building Construction Trade Council
Chris Newton, Designee for Dale LeBlanc, LA Association of Builders &
Contractors

Absent:

Senator Elbert Guillory, State Senate
Kim Matherne, Dept. of Children and Family Services, Designee
Dr. Monty Sullivan, LA Community & Technical College System
Representative Steven Pylant, House of Representatives
James Landry, LA Association of Business & Industry

Others:

Leila Miller, Dept. Health & Hospital
Judge Scott Schlegel, 24th JDC
Liz Keenan, LPHI
Judge Laurie White, Orleans Parish

Dept. of Public Safety & Corrections Headquarters Staff:

Tammy Jetson, Office of Offender Reentry
Gretchen McCarstle, Office of Offender Reentry
Rita Thomas, Office of Offender Reentry
Angela Whittaker, DPS&C Secretary's Office

Approval of Minutes:

- Motion: To approve Minutes from Thursday, March 12, 2015, Board meeting made by Louis Reine; Seconded by Sheriff Cazes
- Vote: Unanimous approval

Justice Reinvestment Initiative Status Update:

- Meeting began with a presentation on the Justice Reinvestment Initiative by Keith Nordyke
- Maximizing State Reform Grant was written to create a Risk Need/Responsivity tool for the Department of Corrections, participating Courts and the Board of Pardons and Parole Committee to create one mechanism of assessing an offender or defendants' risks/needs and identifying those needs so that, the courts could pass appropriate sentencing conditions
- Judge Schlegel explained the Compass tool utilized in his Court that is similar to the department's tool
- The goals for creating this tool was to have consistency so that, the judges would have some confidence that the person really does have these specific needs; develop consistency in getting it right the first time; and helping with communication between the Courts and Department of Corrections
- The tool being created by the Justice Reinvestment Grant will be stored on the Department of Corrections' server
- The risk portion of the tool is currently being worked on.
- The first paper version of this tool should be ready in October for review and to get the necessary feedback
- All of the data the Department has on a particular offender is being used to crunch the numbers to see what is relevant. The data is also being used to cross reference with other tools being used across the country
- This is a three year grant
- There is funding in the grant for automating the tool into our system at some point in the future
- The Department system is web-based so it will be easily accessible

- The tool is designed to provide the Board of Pardons and Parole Committee members with an objective tool that may assist them in reaching their decision
- Keith Nordyke has currently conducted 29 focus groups which included Judicial Court Judges from across the State
- He received positive feedback from the focus groups
- Currently developing a new case planning tool which would fall under the Louisiana Prisoner's Reentry Initiative that would replace the Department's current tool
- As part of the Louisiana Prisoner's Reentry Initiative, there is a state-wide recidivism reduction grant out of the Bureau of Justice systems that has a planning phrase of one (1) year and has another grant that can be applied for which would provide us with four (4) million dollars in funding
- We've applied for the planning grant and our goal is to help at the local level
- Our planning phrase would be how to deploy it and then the larger piece would be to place organizers in each of the different areas who would spearhead the development and oversight of those local entities
- Factors that determine an offender's risk/need was discussed
- Priority would go towards a high risk individual rather than low risk
- Prisoner's Reentry Initiative will plug into this tool to create a case plan that will be used to provide information to Probation and Parole, Prisons, Local Jails, Board of Pardons and Parole Committee and the Courts

RAC Creation, Members, Powers & Duties

A. R.S. 15:1199.4

- This statute governs the Reentry Advisory Council
- Outlines what the Council duties are
- Recommendations have been made for this Council to look at some revisions to particular memberships
- Currently under R.S. 15:1199.4(e,6) the Louisiana Chaplain Association does not have a person in membership and has not for the past two years

- A proposal recommending Legislation next year that would expand R.S. 15:1199.6(e,6) to include a couple of Interfaith Conferences (Inner Church Conference and PICO)
- A Chaplain from Inner Church Conference and PICO would recommend one person from each group and then the Governor would select one from the group
- Will help with quorums and have the faith-based community represented on this Council
- Page 2 of the Statute (attached), listed what the Council should be working on
- The Department has been doing the work listed in the Statute but input is needed from the Council for suggestions on how we can make it better
 - A suggestion was made to create a nine member local district board and would share information on the state level so everyone could possibly be on the same level; not necessary legislation to create the board but a recognized board
- Need to take a look at how we better accomplish these goals

2015 Legislative Session

HCR 82

- Creates the Louisiana Justice Reinvestment Task Force, under the jurisdiction of the Louisiana Sentencing Commission and the Department of Public Safety and Corrections
- Goals and membership for the Task Force are listed
- Need to make sure what they are doing is incorporated with what we are doing so none of the information is lost

HR 499

- This act effects the Office of Motor Vehicles requiring them to issue a provisional Class “E” driver’s license to certain persons upon their release from incarceration

HCR 134

- Creates the Criminal Justice Funding Commission to study and make recommendations to the legislature for the development of a more unified, stable, and statewide funding structure for the fair,

efficient, and effective administration of the criminal justice system

- The goals and membership for the Commission are listed

HR 203

- Urge and request the Reentry Advisory Council to identify strategies to afford offenders committed to the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, who are confined in parish correctional facilities, the support necessary to enhance education, job skills, training, and need behaviors to facilitate successful reentry upon release
- Most of these are already being done and all new strategies will be added to the Council's Annual Report

SB 83

- Enacted relative to provisional licenses for ex-offenders; to provide for provisional licenses for certain occupations; to provide for exceptions; and to provide for related matters

SCR 138

- Same as HR 203
- We are doing a lot of work at the local level

Other business

- Change the next RAC meeting scheduled for September 10, 2015, to September 28, 2015, so Dennis Schrantz can attend the meeting and give the Council an update on what the Department is doing
- No other business to discuss

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.