

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY  
3101 North Front Street, Harrisburg, PA

March 10, 2021 Commission Meeting  
MINUTES

Before: Chairman Charles H. Ramsey  
Ms. Karen Baker, Commissioner  
Mr. Mark Bergstrom, Commissioner  
Judge Mary Jane Bowes, Commissioner  
Representative Tim Briggs, Commissioner  
Mr. Tarik Casteel, Commissioner  
Mr. Philip Damiani, Commissioner  
Mr. Michael Deery, Esq., Designee for Honorable Vincent Hughes  
Mr. John Delaney, Jr., Commissioner  
Colonel Robert Evanchick, Commissioner  
Honorable James J. Fitzgerald III, Commissioner  
Honorable Anthony Harvilla, Commissioner  
Honorable David W. Heckler, Commissioner  
Ms. Pennie Hockenberry, Commissioner  
Dr. Gerald Huesken, Designee for Mr. Noe Ortega  
Ms. Carol Lavery, Commissioner  
Mr. Sean T. McGinley, Commissioner  
Mr. Geoff Moulton, Commissioner  
Mr. Kevin Schreiber, Commissioner  
Ms. Joni Shenck, Designee for Representative Sheryl Delozier  
Mr. Keith Snyder, Commissioner  
Mr. Richard Steele, Commissioner  
Mr. Michael Vereb, Commissioner  
Mr. David Wade, Designee for Honorable Josh Shapiro  
Mr. William Ward, Esq., Commissioner  
Ms. Christine Weschler, Esq., Commissioner  
Ms. Vicki Wilken, Designee for Honorable Patrick Browne

Guests: Ms. Deborah Carpenter, Board Secretary, Chairman's Office, Pennsylvania Parole Board  
Ms. Kristen Rodack, Executive Policy Specialist, Department of Health  
Mr. Steven Ross, Special Assistant to Secretary Jennifer Smith  
Judge Russell Shurtleff, Co-Chair, County Adult Probation and Parole Advisory Committee

Staff: Michael Pennington, Executive Director  
Sally Barry, Director, Office of Justice Programs  
Kathleen Buckley, Director, Office of Victims' Services  
Kirsten Kenyon, Director, Office of Research, Evaluation and Strategic Policy Development  
Derin Myers, Director, Office of Financial Management and Administration  
Debra Sandifer, Chief Counsel  
Jeffrey Blystone  
Stacie Brendlinger  
Kathy Clarke  
Christina Cosgrove-Rooks  
Leandria Dorsey  
Chris Epoca  
James Haas  
Nancy Heisler  
Heather Hewitt  
Rebecca Kiehl  
Samantha Koch  
Geoffrey Kolchin  
Michael Leister  
Diane Morgan  
Robert Orth  
John Pfau  
Brian Swoyer  
Rebecca Szczypta  
Lindsay Vaughan  
Jacqueline Weaknecht  
Danielle Wilbert  
Gregory Young

## I. Call to Order

The March 10, 2021 meeting of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) was called to order at 10:00 by Chairman Charles Ramsey. He informed members that the meeting was being recorded, to which there were no objections, before requesting roll call.

## II. Chairman's Report

Chairman Charles H. Ramsey

- The first order of business was to approve the minutes from the December 9, 2020 meeting.

**Motion:** Vereb. **Seconded:** Deery. **Abstentions:** None  
**Aye Votes: 25 No Votes: 0 Motion Adopted**

- Chairman Ramsey introduced and welcomed Representative Tim Briggs from Montgomery County. Representative Briggs was appointed by House Democratic Leader Joanna McClinton to serve on the Commission. He has been a member of House since 2009 and is the Democratic Chair of the House Judiciary Committee.
- In December, the Commission unanimously approved PCCD's 2021-2025 Strategic Framework, which sets agency-wide priorities to inform decision-making by the Commission, Advisory Committees, Training Boards, Subcommittees, and staff. The Strategic Framework is available on the home page of PCCD's website for members, stakeholders, partners, and the general public to view and download.

Since the Commission's adoption of the Strategic Framework document, PCCD staff have been working to develop project plans and tools that will help guide the agency as we transition from strategic planning to implementation and monitoring efforts. These will include detailed action steps, timeframes, and performance measures to help track our progress toward meeting our goals. We expect to be able to provide more detailed information and other updates regarding those efforts at future meetings.

- Pennsylvania was approached by the National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA) to participate in a "Promising Practices" podcast series to highlight our agency's strategic planning process, specifically the ability to pivot to a fully virtual process during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. NCJA believes other state agencies across the country would be interested in learning from our experience in Pennsylvania as they undertake their own strategic planning efforts.
- March 11 marks a full year since PCCD staff presented the Special Council on Gun Violence's Report of Findings, Recommendations, and Action Items to the Commission and Governor. The report was developed pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order on Reducing Gun Violence, signed in August 2019, and included 35 recommendations covering multiple areas, including firearm suicide, community gun violence, domestic violence-related shootings, mass shootings, and unintentional shootings.

The timing of the report's release overlapped with the early days of the COVID-19 crisis. In the year since the report's release, PCCD has worked with partners to make progress in implementing some of the Special Council's recommendations, making adjustments and adaptations as needed. This included prioritizing state funding allocated to PCCD this year as part of its School Safety and Security Grant Fund for Community Violence Prevention and Reduction Grants to support initiatives focused on addressing gun violence in areas with high-violent crime rates. On February 24, the School Safety and Security Committee approved \$3.2 million for 11 applications specifically addressing gun violence.

Over the past year, PCCD has also listened to and learned from people and communities impacted by gun violence so we can direct state-level resources more effectively.

In January, PCCD staff met virtually with Gun Violence Reduction grantees to hear about the different strategies they've put in place using PCCD funding to prevent shootings and homicides in their areas. Most communities reported seeing increases in shootings over the past year, spurred by the ripple effects of COVID-19 and by local contexts like gang and drug-related activity. Grantees shared success stories as well as "lessons learned" from their efforts to prevent shootings and homicides using a variety of models and programs, and the adaptations they made in light of COVID-19. The pandemic had immediate and far-reaching impacts on grantees' projects and partnerships, particularly for youth-focused initiatives that relied primarily on schools and for models that rely on face-to-face interactions. While many of these activities were able to pivot to virtual settings, or resume when COVID restrictions began to ease up, the disruption and distance caused many to worry about people falling through the cracks, especially young people. Grantees overwhelmingly expressed appreciation for the flexibility, support, and extension of funding provided by PCCD staff during this challenging time. Grantees also highlighted numerous partners integral to their prevention efforts – including faith leaders, hospitals, education institutions, youth-serving organizations, and grassroots groups – and noted the importance of getting buy-in and building trust within the community as a prerequisite to violence prevention.

A common theme emerging from those conversations was a desire to connect with peers in other communities to learn about other initiatives across the state. To that end, PCCD staff are working on a document that will compile highlights of grantees' programs and some of the common themes we heard to use as a resource moving forward. We're also in the planning stages of developing a Statewide Community of Practice to promote collaboration, outreach, technical assistance, and training support for groups working on the frontlines of violence prevention in their communities.

Recognizing the substantial harm caused by gun violence across Pennsylvania, and its disproportionate impacts on people of color and marginalized communities, PCCD's 2021-2025 Strategic Framework included goals and objectives explicitly focused on supporting effective, community-led efforts to prevent gun violence. We are committed to using the resources at our disposal to support communities with the highest rates of gun violence in planning, designing, launching, implementing, and expanding effective gun violence prevention and intervention strategies.

### III. Executive Director's Report

Michael Pennington, Executive Director

Mr. Pennington thanked the PCCD staff team for continuing to produce high quality work and for always stepping up when tasked with additional responsibilities as an agency.

- As noted at the December 9 meeting and consistent with the overall plan approved by the Committee of Advisory Committee Chairs, we are bringing a recommendation on the remaining Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental (CES) funds for the state law enforcement agencies to the Commission. At the September meeting, the Commission approved \$6 million in CES funds to the Department of Corrections, the Attorney General's Office, the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts, and the State Police to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus. There was significant need then and there continues to be a need among these four agencies.

Included in the briefing materials is a summary and chart describing what was requested from the four agencies. Each agency was asked to submit a project modification request to augment their current grant with the additional funds.

**Action Item:** Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding

Action is requested to approve four requests totaling up to \$1,246,589 in Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental funds.

**Motion:** Snyder. **Seconded:** Steele. **Abstentions:** Evanchick, Moulton, Vereb, Wade.  
**Aye Votes: 22 No Votes: 0 Motion Adopted**

- Last year at this time, the Commission approved the first round of Nonprofit Security Grant Fund Program awards. Act 83 of 2019 directs PCCD to administer grants to Pennsylvania-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations who principally serve individuals, groups or institutions that are included within a bias motivation category for single bias hate crime incidents as identified by the FBI's Hate Crime Statistics publication, such as religion, sexual orientation, and disability. Applicants are eligible to apply for security enhancements designed to protect the safety and security of their facilities.

These grants range from \$5,000 to \$150,000, with grants over \$25,000 requiring non-state financial participation from applicants. Last year, we received over 800 applications totaling approximately \$27 million in requests. This year, we received 429 requests, requesting nearly \$15 million.

As mentioned at the December meeting, PCCD formed a workgroup composed of PCCD staff, Commission members, the State Police, and the Governor's Office of Homeland Security to discuss our review methodology and overall approach to the grants. Due to the high interest in the grant program and the limited availability of funding, priority consideration in the application review process was given to those nonprofit organizations that indicated that their organization or membership was the victim of a hate-crime and clearly justified a credible hate-crime threat to their organization; served a population clearly susceptible to a hate-crime; and requests from entities that had not received prior funding from either PCCD's or PEMA's Nonprofit Security Grant Program. Geographic distribution of the grants was also taken into consideration.

**Action Item:** Non-Profit Security Grant Funding

Action is requested to approve 130 applications totaling up to \$5,015,903 in state Nonprofit Security Grant Fund Program funding.

**Motion:** Vereb. **Seconded:** Deery. **Abstentions:** None.  
**Aye Votes: 26 No Votes: 0 Motion Adopted**

- Mr. Pennington followed up on Justice Fitzgerald's request from the December meeting that we provide a brief explanation of how PCCD assesses the impact of funded projects, summarizing the overall approach used and highlighting some examples of outcomes. To give some perspective, PCCD administers roughly 3,000 grants, which is six times more than in 2016.

Most all grant projects are required to establish data elements that will be reported to PCCD on a quarterly basis. There are a range of data elements reported that include process and intermediate outcome measures. Process measures include measures such as the number of individuals receiving training and intermediate outcome measures includes items such as measured improvements in academic performance or reductions in certain problem behaviors.

Staff review and approve these quarterly submissions and engage with grantees when there are questions related to implementation. Grantees are required to complete a final report that includes standard questions related to the completion of project objectives and the sustainability of the project following PCCD funding.

As far as monitoring and technical assistance, we do several types including introductory contact with all competitively awarded grantees, review of quarterly fiscal/program reports, accuracy assessments of data submitted, virtual and onsite monitoring, financial audits, grant close out reviews, requiring program specific technical assistance, and program/service specific evaluations.

When we aggregated that data for the prior year, we found that:

- 67% of grants accomplished all grant objectives; and
- 63% would be sustained at the funded level.

For programs that PCCD funds routinely, standardized performance measures are aggregated across different types of programs. For example, in the past year the Violence and Delinquency Prevention programs showed that 75% of participants demonstrated academic improvement which we know is a significant factor in avoiding delinquency. In the Intermediate Punishment Program, there were over 18,000 individuals who participated in the program which projected to the avoidance of nearly 700,000 jail days.

PCCD calculated that nearly 600,000 victims received services through our victim services programs; in the Naloxone for first responders program PCCD distributed nearly 27,000 kits which contributed to approximately 7,000 overdose reversals; and the Child Advocacy Center (CAC) program has been successful in making CAC services available within sixty minutes' drive of 99% of the state's population, and nearly 13,000 children received services in the past year.

In cases where PCCD needs to know more about the specific impacts of a program, PCCD has commissioned studies or evaluations to help inform the decision-making. For example, PCCD has invested significantly in delinquency prevention activities and commissioned a report that showed a \$4.50 return on every \$1 invested based on the prevention of problem behaviors in children. Through a research relationship with the Indiana University of PA, PCCD has studied the outcomes associated with the IP program and found that participants had a 22.4% recidivism rate which is a lower rate than incarceration or regular parole supervision. Further, PCCD continues to study the implementation of the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol being utilized in the juvenile justice system. Early indications are that programs using this protocol are very promising.

While these are some examples of the types of program impact that we are seeing, we also believe that it is more important than ever that we track and report on the results of the projects that we fund and to that end we are taking steps to enhance that process understanding that we need to be thinking more strategically about outcome reporting at the beginning of our funding framework processes and continue that focus through the duration of project implementation. We have put systems in place to include that topic throughout the process and are moving to add resources to our in-house research department and to expand our relationship with IUP. Based on some of these changes, we look forward to including our assessment of historical implementations when we bring recommendations to you for consideration.

Mr. Pennington offered that if a Commission member is ever interested in receiving specific information about a certain project or group of projects, we would do our best to accommodate those types of requests. He thanked Justice Fitzgerald for bringing up this important question and thanked the Advisory Committee and Board Chairs for their leadership and all members for helping to inform and move our work forward.

#### **IV. Children's Advocacy Center Advisory Committee Report**

*Honorable David W. Heckler*

*Ms. Kirsten Kenyon*

- Committee Chair David Heckler provided the Children's Advocacy Center Advisory Committee (CACAC) report, which begins on page 1 of the Commission meeting materials. Mr. Heckler provided brief highlights from the CACAC meeting, held on February 2, 2021 via Teams, which included discussion on potential changes to the Child Protective Services Law and other related laws. There were no action items for consideration.

**V. County Adult Probation and Parole Advisory Committee Report**

*Judge Russell Shurtleff*

- Committee Co-chair Judge Russell Shurtleff provided the County Adult Probation and Parole Advisory Committee (CAPPAC) report, which begins on page 2 of the Commission meeting materials. Judge Shurtleff provided brief highlights from the CAPPAC meeting, held on February 18, 2021 via Teams. There were no action items for consideration.

**VI. Criminal Justice Advisory Committee Report**

*Mr. Mike Vereb*

*Ms. Sally Barry and Ms. Jacqueline Weaknecht*

- Committee Chair Mike Vereb provided the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC) report, which begins on page 3 of the Commission meeting materials. Mr. Vereb provided brief highlights from the CJAC meeting, held on February 10, 2021 via Teams, and presented one informational item and two action items for the Commission's approval.

**Action Item:** Federal Body-Worn Camera Policy and Implementation Program (BWCP) Funds  
Staff and the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee are recommending approval of 21 applications requesting a total not to exceed \$684,760 in federal BWCP funds, pending the resolution of any outstanding programmatic and/or fiscal issues.

**Motion:** Vereb. **Seconded:** Ward. **Abstentions:** None.

**Aye Votes: 26 No Votes: 0 Motion Adopted**

**Action Item:** Federal State Opioid Response Funds – Augmentation  
Staff and the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee are recommending approval of two augmentations requesting a total not to exceed \$70,849 in federal State Opioid Response funds, pending the resolution of any outstanding programmatic and/or fiscal issues.

**Motion:** Vereb. **Seconded:** Bowes. **Abstentions:** None.

**Aye Votes: 26 No Votes: 0 Motion Adopted**

**VII. Victims' Services Advisory Committee Report**

*Mr. John Delaney*

*Ms. Kathy Buckley*

- Committee Chair John Delaney provided the Victims' Services Advisory Committee (VSAC) report, which begins on page 15 of the Commission meeting materials. Mr. Delaney provided brief highlights from the VSAC meeting, held on February 9, 2021 via Teams, and presented three informational updates and two action items for the Commission's approval.

**Action Item:** State Rights and Services Act Funds  
Staff and the Victims' Services Advisory Committee are recommending approval of an additional \$98,882 in Rights and Services Act (RSA) funding to the City of Philadelphia Treasurer for the District Attorney's Office for a total RSA allocation of \$2,357,153 and a total project award including VOJO funds of \$2,796,278, pending the resolution of any outstanding programmatic and/or fiscal issues.

**Motion:** Delaney. **Seconded:** Snyder. **Abstentions:** None.

**Aye Votes: 26 No Votes: 0 Motion Adopted**

**Action Item:** Federal Victims of Crime Act Funds – Augmentation  
Staff and the Victims' Services Advisory Committee are recommending the approval of this augmentation requesting a total not to exceed \$35,000 in Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Administrative funds to the Pennsylvania District Attorney's Institute, pending the resolution of any outstanding programmatic and/or fiscal concerns.

**Motion:** Delaney. **Seconded:** Vereb. **Abstentions:** None.

**Aye Votes: 26 No Votes: 0 Motion Adopted**

**VIII. Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Committee Report**

*Mr. Keith Snyder*

*Ms. Sally Barry, Mr. Geoffrey Kolchin, Mr. Gregory Young*

- Committee Chair Keith Snyder provided the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Committee (JJRPC) report, which begins on page 19 of the Commission meeting materials. Mr. Snyder provided brief highlights from the JJRPC meeting, held on February 4, 2021 via Teams, and presented four informational updates. There were no action items for consideration.

**IX. Mental Health and Justice Advisory Committee Report**

*Mr. William Ward*

- Committee Chair William Ward provided the Mental Health and Justice Advisory Committee (MHJAC) report, which begins on page 21 of the Commission meeting materials. Mr. Ward provided brief highlights from the MHJAC meeting, held on February 3, 2021 via Teams. There were no action items for consideration.

**X. Constables' Education and Training Board Report**

*Mr. John Bruno*

*Mr. John Pfau*

Chairman Ramsey noted that there was no report for the Constables' Education and Training Board other than the material that is included as part of the packet.

**XI. Sheriff and Deputy Sheriff Education and Training Board Report**

*Sheriff Eric J. Weaknecht*

*Mr. John Pfau*

Chairman Ramsey noted that there was no report for the Sheriff and Deputy Sheriff Education and Training Board other than the material that is included as part of the packet.

**XII. Other Business**

Chairman Ramsey invited members to bring other business before the Commission. There were no members of the Commission who brought forward other business.

**XIII. Public Voice**

Chairman Ramsey invited anyone from the public to address the Commission. There were no members of the public who addressed the Commission.

**XIV. Adjournment**

Chairman Ramsey noted that the next Commission Meeting is scheduled for June 9, 2021 and will be held virtually.

Hearing no further comment, Chairman Ramsey asked for a motion for adjournment.

*Commissioner Vereb made a motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting concluded at 10:54 AM.*