

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

June 9, 2021 Commission Meeting
MINUTES

Before: Chairman Charles H. Ramsey
Mr. John Adams, Commissioner
Reverend Dr. Anne Ard, Commissioner
Ms. Alison Beam, Commissioner
Mr. Mark Bergstrom, Commissioner
Judge Mary Jane Bowes, Commissioner
Representative Tim Briggs, Commissioner
Mr. Michael Deery, Esq., Designee for Honorable Vincent Hughes
Mr. John Delaney, Jr., Commissioner
Honorable Diane Ellis-Marseglia, Commissioner
Ms. Suzanne Estrella, Commissioner
Colonel Robert Evanchick, Commissioner
Ms. Tanoa Fagan, Designee for Honorable M. Snead
Honorable David W. Heckler, Commissioner
Dr. Gerald Huesken, Designee for Mr. Noe Ortega
Honorable Timika R. Lane, Commissioner
Mr. Sean T. McGinley, Commissioner
Mr. Geoff Moulton, Commissioner
Dr. Edward Mulvey, Commissioner
Honorable Carolyn Nichols, Commissioner
Ms. Joni Shenck, Designee for Representative Sheryl DeLozier
Honorable Russell D. Shurtleff, Commissioner
Honorable Jennifer Smith, Commissioner
Mr. Keith Snyder, Commissioner
Mr. Richard Steele, Commissioner
Mr. R. Kevin Sutter, Commissioner
Mr. Michael Vereb, Commissioner
Ms. Phoenicia Wallace, Commissioner
Mr. William Ward, Esq., Commissioner
Ms. Christine Weschler, Esq., Commissioner
Ms. Vicki Wilken, Designee for Honorable Patrick Browne

Guests: Mr. Marcus Brown
Mr. Timothy Clawges, House Judiciary Committee
Ms. Donna George, PA State System of Higher Education

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
Chris Epoca
James Haas
Gregory Harhigh
Cynthia Heasley
Nancy Heisler
Heather Hewitt
Rebecca Kiehl
Samantha Koch
Geoffrey Kolchin
Roi Ligon
Zoe Miner
Diane Morgan
Natalie Novotny-Goles
Connor Michael O'Boyle
John Pfau
Brian Swoyer
Rebecca Szczypa
Lindsay Vaughan
Jacqueline Weaknecht
Danielle Wilbert
Gregory Young

I. Call to Order

The June 9, 2021 meeting of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) was called to order at 10:00 by Chairman Charles Ramsey. Roll call was requested. He informed members that the meeting was being recorded, to which there were no objections.

II. Chairman's Report

Chairman Charles H. Ramsey

- The first order of business was to approve the minutes from the March 10, 2021 meeting.

Motion: Bowes. **Seconded:** Deery. **Abstentions:** None
Aye Votes: 30 No Votes: 0 Motion Adopted

- Chairman Ramsey noted that after meeting virtually for the past year, we will be issuing a survey to Commission members to gather thoughts and feedback on how we will conduct business moving forward. We are getting new equipment installed in the Commission room that will give us improved capacity for members to join by video in the future.
- We have four new Commission members since our March meeting. Chairman Ramsey introduced and welcomed Judge Russell D. Shurtleff, Judge Timika Lane, Suzanne Estrella, and Tanoa Fagan. Judge Shurtleff and Judge Lane were named co-chairs of the County Adult Probation and Parole Advisory Committee.

Judge Shurtleff joins us from Northeast Pennsylvania where he is the President Judge for the 44th Judicial District serving Wyoming and Sullivan Counties. He has served in this capacity since 2010, following 12 years of service as a Magisterial District Judge, 20 years of successful private practice, and service to his country in the United States Marine Corps. He has been instrumental in the establishment and proliferation of problem-solving court practices in Pennsylvania and implements those practices in his jurisdiction, and has been a significant influencer of county probation and parole practices through his leadership with the Firearms Education and Training Commission.

Judge Lane joins us from Philadelphia. Following a successful teaching career, Judge Lane decided to pursue a career in law. After success in private practice and service as a major trial attorney for the Defender Association of Philadelphia, she served as Chief Legal Counsel for State Senator Anthony H. Williams and as the Democratic Executive Director for the Pennsylvania State Senate State Government Committee. She was elected to the Court of the Common Pleas in November 2013. She is presently assigned to the Major Trials program in the Criminal Division, serves as Chair of the Board of Judges Board of City Trust Committee, and Co-Chair of the Local Criminal Rules Committee. She leads efforts to address re-entry challenges and is a long-standing advocate for improved probation practices.

In March of this year, Governor Wolf named Suzanne Estrella to serve as the Commonwealth Victim Advocate. Suzanne received her law degree from the University of Tulsa College of Law and has over 20 years of experience providing legal services to crime victims. Prior to this appointment, she was with the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) where she served as their Legal Director overseeing the Sexual Violence Legal Assistance Project. She has extensive experience providing training to those that are providing services to survivors of sexual assault.

Tanoa Fagan, Director of the Office of Policy Development, will serve as the designee for Department of Human Services Secretary Meg Snead. As a dual deputate, she works with the Governor's Policy Office and DHS leadership to transmit information, recommendations, and processes that impact human service policy. Previously, Tanoa worked in various roles within DHS's Office of Income Maintenance. In her last position, Tanoa served as Director for the Bureau of Employment Programs, where she had oversight of the state's employment and

training programs for recipients of public assistance, and she worked to redesign the state's employment and training programs.

Chairman Ramsey also welcomed Alison Beam, who serves as the acting Secretary of Health. Prior to her role with Department of Health, Alison served as deputy chief of staff to Governor Wolf, overseeing initiatives across the departments of Health, Human Services, Drug and Alcohol Programs, Aging and Insurance, as well as the Office of Advocacy and Reform.

- Chairman Ramsey thanked Judge Marsico and Justice Fitzgerald for their many years of service on the Commission, as they have completed their terms. They also served on PCCD Advisory Committees and we very much appreciate all of their service to PCCD and the Commonwealth.
- On April 30, 2021, PCCD reconvened the Governor's Special Council on Gun Violence to examine the data and drivers of gun violence statewide, as well as specifically look at the surge of violence currently occurring in the City of Philadelphia. Special Council members heard from a panel of state and city law enforcement officials working on the front lines to offer some perspectives and context behind these troubling numbers and trends. This included data briefings and presentations from the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General, as well as Philadelphia Police Commissioner Danielle Outlaw.

Providing support for effective, community-led gun violence prevention efforts is one of PCCD's top strategic priorities. Since FY 2017-18, PCCD has invested nearly \$6.1 million in state and federal funds to support local gun violence reduction efforts. Over the past year, PCCD has worked diligently to do what we can with the resources at our disposal to make progress on recommendations identified by the Special Council in its March 2020 report and respond to the needs of local communities.

On May 12, 2021, the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC) approved a funding framework to make additional investments in community-led strategies to reduce gun violence; and on May 18, 2021, PCCD announced the availability of \$5 million in state Fiscal Year 2021 Gun Violence Reduction Grant Program funds to support eligible applicants in areas of Pennsylvania with the highest rates of gun violence.

The goal of this competitive grant program is to address immediate, short-term, and long-term public safety needs in Pennsylvania's communities. In addition, this funding will help fulfill one of the Special Council's recommendations by focusing specifically on supporting smaller, grassroots groups working in areas with the highest rates of gun violence. It also proposes investments in strategies and promising practices endorsed by the Special Council, including violence interruption and street outreach initiatives, "Safe Passages" programs designed to improve safety for youth and adults going to and from schools and community centers, and improving coordination of care for individuals who have survived shootings, among other approaches.

To improve accessibility for smaller organizations and new applicants, PCCD is utilizing an online survey form (SurveyMonkey) for initial funding requests. PCCD hosted two informational webinars to walk prospective applicants through the funding announcement and application process. The deadline for initial funding requests is June 30, 2021. More detailed information regarding this funding opportunity is available on PCCD's website in the "Gun Violence" section under the "Criminal Justice" tab.

Chairman Ramsey took a moment to thank and acknowledge the efforts of the CJAC and their Chair, Commissioner Vereb, for the leadership and consideration of this important issue. He looks forward to reviewing the final projects that are selected and recommended for funding when the Commission reconvenes on September 8.

III. Executive Director's Report

Michael Pennington, Executive Director

- With the Governor's recent communication related to ending some COVID mitigation efforts, we are nearing the time when the restrictions on using our building will end. We have learned a lot during this time, have found some significant successes in a number of different areas of our operations, and will look to capitalize on some of those moving forward. We do anticipate the continued use of remote working options for staff and for meeting facilitation, but we are aware of the need for us to maintain connectivity among our staff team and with our external partners. The Chairman stated that we will be surveying our membership related to long-term meeting planning. Our current plan is for all of our Commission related committee meetings to be held remotely through the next quarter. The survey will be included in our JAG funding priorities survey.
- Since the Commission's adoption of PCCD's 2021-2025 Strategic Framework in December, members of the agency's Strategic Planning Team have continued to meet regularly. Based on feedback provided by staff in the 2020 Staff Engagement Survey, as well as the goals and objectives included in the Strategic Framework, the agency has identified the following priorities for the upcoming fiscal year:

Enhancing internal and external communications. PCCD issued an inaugural quarterly staff newsletter in April to provide updates on major activities and things happening across the agency. Staff are also in the process of updating PCCD's website, revamping the Intranet, and working to develop notification protocols when policies are updated.

Enhancing the Egrants System experience. PCCD has hired an additional Egrants developer to expedite the electronic signature installation and to support the Egrants Help Desk.

Advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and fairness among the systems PCCD engages and serves. We continue to enhance system-led efforts through our Racial and Ethnic Disparities (R/ED) Subcommittees and the work of the Advisory Committees, Boards, and Commission. In addition, PCCD participated in a "Dismantling Systemic Racism in Pennsylvania State Agencies" workshop and Anti-Racism Institute initiative led by the Governor's Office of Performance through Excellence and the Pennsylvania Department of Health's Office of Health Equity.

Increasing community engagement and increasing awareness of PCCD and its resources. Staff have developed a "PCCD 101" presentation template to use during webinars and other events covering the role and structure of the agency, our programs and initiatives, and a review of the funding and grants process. We have also initiated a comprehensive review of the funding announcement process and other procedures to improve accessibility, and to try to capture more meaningful performance measures to better understand the impact of our programs.

Addressing staffing and capacity concerns. PCCD is receiving support from the Administration related to the additional work assigned to PCCD and our need for complement. We are also exploring permanent telework options based on employee feedback and maintained work productivity.

Streamlining PCCD's processes. PCCD recently adopted a temporary electronic signature process, implemented a fax program that sends faxed documents to email, and are exploring secure document submission applications.

- Recently, PCCD staff have initiated planning discussions focused on our upcoming 2021-23 JAG plan and competitive funding announcements, aligned with our Strategic Framework and

specifically addressing unfunded or underfunded priorities. As with past editions, the JAG Plan will undergo review and approval from the Advisory Committee Chairs prior to its release.

To ensure the JAG Plan is well informed, PCCD staff have completed an initial scan of the Strategic Framework and funding availability, including a review of prior years' JAG funding requests, as well as an evaluation of information and suggestions shared by Committee members last fall when we were going through our strategic planning process in terms of areas PCCD should prioritize. We are planning to issue a survey on June 15 allowing Commission and Advisory Committee members the opportunity to provide additional feedback on goals, objectives, and activities identified by PCCD staff through the initial scan.

We will review the survey feedback and present a recommendation to the Advisory Committee Chairs when they convene next month. Our goal in this process is to develop a final JAG funding announcement that includes a targeted, focused set of strategies and activities. We look forward to providing Commission members with additional updates regarding implementation of these initiatives at future meetings.

IV. 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 1 of the Commission meeting materials. Mr. Vereb provided brief highlights from the CJAC meeting, held on May 12, 2021 via Teams, and presented four action items for the Commission's approval.

Action Item: Capital Case Indigent Defense Program Funds

Staff and the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee are recommending approval of seven applications requesting a total not to exceed \$220,000 in state funds, pending the resolution of any outstanding programmatic and/or fiscal concerns.

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

Aye Votes: 30 No Votes: 0 Motion Adopted

Action Item: Substance Abuse Education and Demand Reduction Funds – Category 1

Staff and the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee are recommending approval of eight applications requesting a total not to exceed \$1,140,162 in state SAEDR funds, pending the resolution of any outstanding programmatic and/or fiscal concerns.

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

Aye Votes: 30 No Votes: 0 Motion Adopted

Action Item: Substance Abuse Education and Demand Reduction Funds – Categories 2 & 3

Staff and the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee are recommending approval of two applications requesting a total not to exceed \$550,000 in state SAEDR funds, pending the resolution of any outstanding programmatic and/or fiscal concerns.

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

Aye Votes: 30 No Votes: 0 Motion Adopted

Action Item: Gun Violence Prevention Coordinator

Staff and the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee are recommending approval of one application requesting a total not to exceed \$500,000 in JAG administrative funds, pending the resolution of any outstanding programmatic and/or fiscal concerns.

Motion: Delaney. **Seconded:** Ward. **Abstentions:** Vereb.

Aye Votes: 29 No Votes: 0 Motion Adopted

Judge Bowes noted that the language "...pending the resolution of any outstanding programmatic and/or fiscal concerns." is included in many of these recommendations. She asked if this is

standard language, and if so, have there been situations where programmatic or fiscal concerns have resulted in the denial of the release of funds. Mr. Pennington responded that this is standard language and if there was a significant issue, we would point it out or it would not be presented to the Commission.

V. Mental Health and Justice Advisory Committee Report

Mr. William Ward

Ms. Sally Barry and Ms. Jacqueline Weaknecht

- Committee Chair William Ward provided the Mental Health and Justice Advisory Committee (MHJAC) report, which begins on page 11 of the Commission meeting materials. Mr. Ward provided brief highlights from the MHJAC meeting, held on May 5, 2021 via Teams, and presented one discussion item. There were no action items for consideration.

VI. 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 13 of the Commission meeting materials. Mr. Heckler provided brief highlights from the CACAC meeting, held on May 4, 2021 via Teams, and presented two action items for the Commission's approval.

Action Item: Endowment Act – Treatment Training Funds

Staff and the Children's Advocacy Center Advisory Committee are recommending approval of six applications requesting a total not to exceed \$288,573 in state Endowment Act funds, pending the resolution of any outstanding programmatic and/or fiscal concerns.

Motion: Heckler. **Seconded:** Snyder. **Abstentions:** Delaney.

Aye Votes: 29 No Votes: 0 Motion Adopted

Action Item: Endowment Act Funds

Staff and the Children's Advocacy Center Advisory Committee are recommending approval of one application requesting a total not to exceed \$206,000 in state Endowment Act funds, pending the resolution of any outstanding programmatic and/or fiscal concerns.

Motion: Heckler. **Seconded:** Ard. **Abstentions:** Adams, Delaney, Fagan.

Aye Votes: 27 No Votes: 0 Motion Adopted

VII. County Adult Probation and Parole Advisory Committee Report

Honorable Russell D. Shurtleff

Honorable Timika Lane

Ms. Sally Barry

- Committee Co-chair Judge Russell Shurtleff provided the County Adult Probation and Parole Advisory Committee (CAPPAC) report, which begins on page 19 of the Commission meeting materials. Judge Shurtleff provided brief highlights from the CAPPAC meeting, held on May 20, 2021 via Teams, and presented two informational updates and three action items for the Commission's approval.

Action Item: Intermediate Punishment Treatment Funds

Staff and the County Adult Probation and Parole Advisory Committee are recommending approval of 58 applications requesting a total not to exceed \$16,732,807 in Intermediate Punishment Treatment Program funds, pending the resolution of any outstanding programmatic and/or fiscal concerns.

Motion: Shurtleff. **Seconded:** Bergstrom. **Abstentions:** Lane, Shurtleff.

Aye Votes: 28 No Votes: 0 Motion Adopted

Action Item: Improvement of Adult Probation Services (Grant-In-Aid) Funds

Staff and the County Adult Probation and Parole Advisory Committee are recommending approval of 65 grant awards not to exceed \$16,150,000 in state Improvement of Adult Probation Services funding (Grant-In-Aid), pending the resolution of any outstanding programmatic and/or fiscal concerns.

Motion: Shurtleff. **Seconded:** Snyder. **Abstentions:** Lane, Shurtleff.

Aye Votes: 28 No Votes: 0 Motion Adopted

Action Item: County Adult Probation and Parole Operating Standards

Staff and the County Adult Probation and Parole Advisory Committee are recommending approval of the 81 initial County Adult Probation and Parole Operating Standards, as described in the Commission meeting materials, with an effective date of July 1, 2021.

Motion: Shurtleff. **Seconded:** Steele. **Abstentions:** None.

Aye Votes: 30 No Votes: 0 Motion Adopted

VIII. 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 66 of the Commission meeting materials. Mr. Delaney provided brief highlights from the VSAC meeting, held on May 11, 2021 via Teams, and presented four informational updates. There were no action items for consideration.

IX. 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 (JJDP) report, which begins on page 69 of the Commission meeting materials. Mr. Snyder provided brief highlights from the JJDP meeting, held on May 13, 2021 via Teams, and presented five informational updates and one action item for the Commission's approval.

Action Item: Substance Abuse Education and Demand Reduction Funds – Youth Focused

Staff and the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Committee are recommending approval of seven applications requesting a total not to exceed \$1,019,174 in state SAEDR funds, pending the resolution of any outstanding programmatic and/or fiscal issues.

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

Aye Votes: 30 No Votes: 0 Motion Adopted

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. Commissioner Ard commended the work of OVS staff and VSAC, particularly in regard to their work on their advocacy regarding the federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) legislative fix. She highlighted the impact the reduction of federal VOCA funding will have on her program and encouraged commissioners to review the information included in the VSAC packet on the bill and potentially lobby PA legislative delegation to take action.

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 September 8, 2021 and will be held virtually.

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

Commissioner Adams made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Commissioner Snyder. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting concluded at 11:03 AM.