

---These minutes were amended by vote during the Commission’s July 18, 2023, meeting---



District of Columbia Sentencing Commission

441 4th St, NW, Suite 430 South, Washington, DC 20001

Telephone (202) 727-8822 Fax (202) 727-7929

MINUTES OF VIRTUAL COMMISSION MEETING

June 20, 2023

Via WebEx

Voting Members in Attendance:

Hon. Milton Lee
Hon. Marisa Demeo
Hon. Rainey Brandt
Frederick Cooke
Nazgol Ghandnoosh
Dave Rosenthal

William Martin
Renata Cooper
Katerina Semyonova
Molly Gill

Non-Voting Members in Attendance:

Cristina Hillyer for Sonya Thompson
Eric Glover
Stephen J. Husk

Leslie Parson

Staff in Attendance:

Linden Fry
Brittany Bunch
Nicholas McGuire

Basil Evans
Taylor Tarnalicki
Mary Zenger (Intern)

Maeghan Buckley
Mia Hebb

Emily Blume
Keelin Herbst

Chairman Monthly Meeting Introduction – Action Item, Judge Lee, Chairman

Judge Lee called the May monthly meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. A roll call was completed, and a quorum was established.

Review and approval of the minutes from May 16, 2023, Commission meeting – Action Item, Judge Lee, Chairman.

The Commission received the draft May meeting minutes for final review prior to the meeting. Members voted by roll call to approve the minutes (seven votes in favor, zero opposed, and three abstained).

Farewell to Retiring Commission Members - Information Item, Judge Lee, Chairman

Judge Lee announced that long-serving Commission member Molly Gill, appointed to the Commission by the Council of the District of Columbia in 2012, would be retiring from the Commission at the beginning of July. Later in the meeting, it was announced that Eric Glover, General Counsel for the District of Columbia Department of Corrections, would be replaced as the D.C. Department of Corrections’ Commission representative. Judge Lee and other Commission Members thanked Ms. Gill and Mr. Glover for their hard work over the years with the Commission and wished them well on the next part of their journeys.

Director’s Report - Information Item, Linden Fry, Executive Director

Mr. Fry provided members with an overview of the Commission’s recent activities.

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The Commission has entered into a new contract with its IT vendor to integrate data from the Superior Court's (Court) new case management system into the GRID system. The Commission's vendor, Mindcubed, Inc., has already begun working with the Court and other partners to design modifications and resolve technical issues.

Commission staff continue to work with the Office of the Attorney General of the District of Columbia (OAG) and the United States Attorney's Office of the District of Columbia (USAO) to gain access to the IJIS 8.1 data feed. The IJIS 8.1 data feed contains case initiation data (often referred to as papering data). Members will be kept abreast of updates.

The Commission's continued efforts to obtain access to Presentence Reports (PSRs) from the Court and the Court Services and Offenders Supervision Agency (CSOSA) has run into difficulty. Commission staff will continue to collaborate with agency partners to discuss their concerns as well as explore other routes for obtaining access.

On July 26, the United States Sentencing Commission will be giving an in-person training to Commission staff. All interested Commission members were invited to participate in the training.

The Commission staff is ending its monthly office hours program for Guidelines users due to lack of attendance and interest. Commission staff will explore other ways that they can provide assistance to judges, practitioners, and CSOSA presentence report writers. Members and agency representatives were encouraged to reach out to Commission staff with ideas regarding how the Commission can continue to support our partner agencies.

Mr. Fry concluded by discussing the Commission's extensive summer community outreach schedule, which includes events with Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, MPD Citizen Advisory Councils, MPD's National Night Out, and a MPD Beat the Streets event. If Commission Members know of additional events the Commission should attend, they were encouraged to reach out to the staff.

Review and Discussion of the proposed changes to the Sentencing Commission in the Safer Stronger Amendment Act of 2023 - Discussion Item, Judge Lee and Linden Fry

Recently, Mayor Bowser proposed the Safer Stronger Act of 2023 which included a number of proposals, including expanding the membership of the Sentencing Commission. Members were provided a memorandum summarizing the bill prepared by Keelin Herbst, Policy Advisor.

The bill proposes the following changes to the Commission's membership structure:

- Adding two additional community members nominated by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council as voting membership positions;
- Changing the Metropolitan Police Department Chief's representative from a non-voting to a voting membership position; and
- Adding the Deputy Mayor of Public Safety or their designee as a non-voting membership position.

Commissions members discussed the proposed bill; the full discussion can be viewed at the below link. The Commission did not vote to take a position on the bill. However, many members expressed the importance of the Commission remaining an apolitical body that prioritizes a data driven decision making process.

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Before the meeting adjourned, members were strongly encouraged to join the July meeting. During the July meeting the Commission will discuss and vote on the proposed changes to the 2023 D.C. Voluntary Sentencing Guidelines Manual.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:02 pm.

NEXT MEETING:
July 18, 2023
Via WebEx

To view the video recording of the full discussion, visit <https://sdc.dc.gov/page/commission-meetings>.