



District of Columbia Sentencing Commission

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DRAFT MINUTES OF COMMISSION MEETING

October 15, 2019

One Judiciary Square, Suite 430S, Washington, DC 20001

Voting Members in Attendance:

Milton Lee	Molly Gill
Frederick Weisberg	Dave Rosenthal
Katerina Semyonova	
Cedric Hendricks	

Non-Voting Members in Attendance:

Diane Strote
Robert Contee
Stephen Husk

Staff in Attendance:

Barbara Tombs-Souvey	Kara Dansky	Taylor Tarnalicki
Mia Hebb	Mehmet Ergun	Miatta Sesay

- I. Judge Lee called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m.
- II. The minutes from September 17, 2019 were approved, pending any changes submitted to Barbara Tombs-Souvey.
- III. Review and Approval of Issue Paper “Long Split Sentences” – Action Item, Mehmet Ergun, Statistician

Review and Approval of Issue Paper: Mr. Ergun provided an overview of issue paper #2 “Long Split Sentences” to the Commission members. This paper explains felony long split sentencing practices, in an effort to increase the public’s understanding and application of the Voluntary Sentencing Guidelines. Mr. Ergun opened the floor for discussion, suggestions, and edits from Commission members. There were some suggestions:

- 1) Include examples of long split sentences – both compliant in the box and compliant out of the box.
- 2) Possibly do an additional issue paper on what compliance means, generally.

Ms. Tombs-Souvey asked Commission members to provide their edits or additional feedback.

- IV. Three -Year Outreach Strategy – Discussion Item, Miatta Sesay-Wood, Outreach Specialist, Barbara Tombs-Souvey, and Judge Lee.

Three – Year Outreach Strategy: Ms. Tombs-Souvey gave an overview of the Council’s recommendations to increase community outreach and Guideline educational activities provided by the Commission in FY20. Ms. Sesay-Wood provided an overview of preliminary goals and strategic objectives to serve as the initial step in developing a comprehensive Outreach and Education Strategy.

To achieve this goal, Ms. Sesay-Wood discussed the following three proposed objectives:

- Develop an educational outreach curriculum related to the Sentencing Guidelines.
- Improve upward and downward communication.
- Develop informative outreach related to work of the DC Sentencing Commission.

Ms. Sesay-Wood opened the floor for questions or suggestions. Commission members raised some questions and gave suggestive feedback. Judge Lee suggested that Commission members participate with some of the outreach activities and provide points of contact of specific groups that may express interest in Guideline Outreach and forward them to Ms. Sesay-Wood. Ms. Tombs-Sesay stated that the next steps will be to take the feedback from the Commission members and develop a set of initiatives to implement the plan for final approval from the Commission.

V. Presentation and Discussion of Title 16 Sentences:

a: Overview of court cases related to Title 16 Offenders – Kara Dansky, General Counsel:

Ms. Dansky gave an brief overview of court cases related to the sentencing of juveniles convicted as adults. Ms. Dansky highlighted relevant cases, to provide the Commission members with a legal background to inform its consideration of its approach to sentencing juveniles who were convicted and sentenced in D.C. Superior court.

b: Presentation of Title 16 Sentencing Data – Taylor Tarnalicki, Research Analyst: In the September 2019 Commission meeting, Commission members expressed interest in sentencing trends for juveniles convicted of Title 16 offenses. Ms. Tarnalicki gave a presentation on the sentencing trends of original felony sentences imposed for 15-17 year-old offenders. The presentation included an examination of sentencing trends by the offender’s age, the convicted offense, the average sentence imposed for each offense, by age, and by criminal history information.

Ms. Tarnalicki opened the floor for questions or comments from the Commission members. Commission members discussed the key findings included in the memo on sentencing trends for juveniles convicted of Title 16 offenses, and requested that Commission staff compare the sentencing trends of Title 16 offenders to those of adult offenders. The Commission will continue the discussion further at the next meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:25pm.

NEXT MEETING:

November 19, 2019

One Judiciary Square (441 4th Street, NW) Suite 430S.