



District of Columbia Advisory Commission on Sentencing

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FULL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, February 18, 2004
500 Indiana Ave., N.W., Room 1500
Washington, DC

Attending	L. Hankins	F. Weisberg	K. Hunt
	P. Riley	H. Cushenberry	J. Cronin
	C. Wellford	R. Johnson	C. Chanhatisilpa
	R. McPhatter	P. Quander	R. Buske
	A. Flaum	J. Stewart	
	B. Weinsheimer	D. Rosenthal	

I. Call to order at 5:10 p.m.

II. Sentencing Guideline Manual/Implementation Subcommittee update

K. Hunt updated the status of the manual and invites other Commission members to join the subcommittee in writing the manual. P. Riley stated that the idea is to have an outline/summary of the manual in the beginning and detailed chapters to follow. Her idea was to not include the report. F. Weisberg seconded.

F. Weisberg then posed the question of how long and elaborate the manual will be. L. Hankins responded that her idea was for the manual to contain a detailed step-by-step account of the processes and issues involved. She further stated that certain issues still need to be discussed such as criminal history and plea agreements.

C. Wellford asked if the manual would be web-based as well. K. Hunt answered that the manual can be put on the Commission's website.

III. Sentencing Guideline Software Web update

F. Weisberg asked Commission members, particularly P. Quander and CSOSA, if they had any ideas on how to assist the Commission in the payment of the consultant to set up the software web. The current plan is to pay the consultant in two payments over two fiscal years. P. Quander stated that if certain things were made possible from the software web, such as CSOSA having the ability to receive certain pieces of information (J and C orders) from the Superior Court electronically, then CSOSA would be have a

stronger rationale to assist in the funding. He added that this will require further thought and discussion.

K. Hunt summarized that Commission staff has met with the proposed consultant (Cross Current) and the IT representatives of CSOSA and Superior Court, who wanted the Statement of Work to be rewritten. Commission staff will also meet with OCTO personnel. OCTO wanted the Commission and Crosscurrent to add some security measures to the software and needs to sign off on the project before a contract is completed.

C. Wellford mentioned that the Maryland Sentencing Commission also has a web-based guidelines software set up and that it is much less expensive. He could not provide any details on how this system might compare to Cross Current's proposal, but he said that he would forward more information.

IV. Legislation and Hearing

The proposed bill was distributed. P. Riley suggested that the Commission ask the City Council to change the name of the Commission to the District of Columbia Sentencing Commission and to use an alternative word to "final recommendation" because the Commission will be a long term agency and continue to issue reports. All members agreed to these recommendations. R. McPhatter suggested that these changes be suggested during the hearing. She added that the City Council will not do anything with the legislation before March 1st.

The subject turned to the hearing scheduled for March 1. R. McPhatter said it is important to explain why we need guidelines and why the Commission is needed to monitor the guidelines. She added that public witnesses will be called in before government witnesses so F. Weisberg and the Commission will get to hear the public's opinion and respond.

P. Riley has concerns about the time period for the pilot program (end of 2006). She stated that by this time, there will still not be sufficient number of cases for many offenses. R. McPhatter stated that the significance of the end of 2006 is that it is the end of City Council period, so there may be a new Judiciary Committee chair if it goes beyond this date.

F. Weisberg stated that he feels that two years is not an unrealistic time frame because for higher end cases, the way judges sentence will tell the Commission pretty early on if the ranges are appropriate or not. He feels that there might not be a need for many cases for these offenses. F. Weisberg added that it needs to be stressed that these ranges are not set in stone and can be changed.

V. Strategic Plan

The Commission went into Executive Session to discuss the strategic plan and its implications for budget and staffing. After much discussion, the majority present agreed that the goals and activities listed on the Plan were appropriate.

Adjourn at 6:50 p.m.

NEXT FULL COMMISSION MEETING:

Wednesday, March 17, 2004
500 Indiana Ave., N.W., Room 1500