

**LOUISVILLE METRO CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMISSION
MEETING SUMMARY**

Thursday, May 17, 2007

Members Present: Judge Kathleen Voor Montano, Chair; Sheriff John Aubrey; David Wilkerson (Designee of Richard Badaracco); Patricia Boyd-Shaw; Tom Campbell; Patricia Combs; Sheriell Cunningham; Rev. Charles Duncan; Judge Audra Eckerle; Elisa Freeman-Carr; Leo G. Smith (Designee for Dan Goyette); Roger Henderson; Richard Lewis; Judge Steve Mershon; Ronnie Harris, Jr. (Designee for David Nicholson); Tim Vize; Carla Kirby (Designee for Clarence Williams); Lt. Col. Tim Emington (Designee for Chief White) and Louis Willis.

Excused Members: Tracy Reinhold; Councilwoman Tina Ward-Pugh

Guests Present: Julie Hayes (District Court Administrator); Peggy Kidwell (Criminologist); Allison Kern (JCAO Drug Court); Jennifer Leibson (Chair, Metro Elder Abuse Services Coordinating Committee); Marty Meyer (Representative of Congressman Yarmuth); Kendra Sanders (Pre-Trial Services); and Mary Ann Wolfe (Pre-Trial Services).

Staff Present: Kim Allen; Betsy Helm; Stephanie Stidham; and Tracey Neathery.

I. WELCOME/CALL TO ORDER

Judge Montano called the meeting to order, welcomed all in attendance, introduced guests, and called for introductions.

II. APPROVAL OF MEETING SUMMARY OF APRIL 19, 2007 MEETING

The meeting summary of the April 19, 2007 meeting was unanimously approved as submitted.

III. CHAIR'S REPORT

Judge Montano reported there was a 35% return rate on the Criminal Justice System Stakeholder Survey, which is a good rate for survey research. A preliminary report is included in the meeting packet. Preliminary findings indicate that all components of the system are reflected in the responses. A more detailed analysis of the findings will be presented at the June meeting.

Judge Montano reported discussion continues on issues of space and personnel for the Drug Court Transition Work Group. A new Request For Proposal (RFP) must be issued by the Administrative Office of the Courts to find a location for the program as the most recent RFP under consideration did not identify any workable possibilities. Interviews are taking place now to fill staff vacancies. The goal is to ensure as little disruption in the operation of the program as possible during the transition.

IV. PANEL DISCUSSION

Judge Montano introduced panel speakers. Dr. James Van Nort, Program Administrator for the Sex Offender Treatment Program, Kentucky Department of Corrections, presented an overview of national and Kentucky research findings on the effectiveness of treatment. He indicated that a meta-analysis conducted by R.K. Hanson, et al., indicated a modest treatment effect with recidivism rates lower for those in treatment. Analysis of data from the Kentucky Department of Corrections in 1997 and 2000, which was included in the Hanson study, has produced similar findings. With knowledge that the recent *New York Times* series focused on offenders in civil commitment proceedings, he noted that these offenders tend to represent the “worst of the worst” and that this should be kept in mind when reviewing the articles.

Matt Veroff, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, private practice, provided an update on the status of community-based sex offender treatment. He reviewed the four basic phases of treatment: Assessment (6-10 sessions); Orientation (completion of psycho-educational modules); Treatment (weekly group sessions for 1-3 years); and Maintenance (weekly sessions for six months). He identified significant challenges that need to be addressed to promote effective treatment. These include: 1) treatment is expensive and places a burden on the existing system of care; 2) little to no monitoring of providers; 3) significant variance in programs; 4) no process for identifying who should be referred to which program; and 5) little reliable data on treatment outcomes.

According to Robert Lanning, Chair, the purpose of the Sex Offender Management Task Force is to improve the management, treatment, and reentry of sex offenders. In 2005, the Task Force received a grant from the Center of Sex Offender Management (CSOM) and identified goals and objectives. The Task Force’s five goals include: to enhance data collection, to improve information sharing, to identify housing for sex offenders returning to the community (the Task Force can pay rent in crisis situations), to implement a high-quality, ongoing training program for criminal justice personnel and treatment providers, and to enhance victim/public awareness. The Task Force has discussed many of the unintended consequences of recent legislation targeting sex offenders, i.e., difficulty finding housing due to proximity to legislatively prohibited locations, reduction in the compliance rate for the sex offender registry, and little incentive to participate in treatment.

Members discussed issues related to the Sex Offender Risk Assessment Board and court-ordered assessments. Although required by statute, Dr. Van Nort reported that the number of Circuit Court orders for assessment has declined. Judge Steve Mershon indicated that he would take this information back to the Circuit Term. Mr. Lanning also indicated that Task Force funds could be used to educate prosecutors on this issue.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Elder Abuse Awareness Event - Jennifer Leibson, Chair, Metro Elder Abuse Services Coordinating Committee, reported on the press conference held on May 8, 2007 to create additional community awareness on the issue of elder abuse, neglect and

exploitation. The event was held in May in recognition of Older Americans Month. The press conference also served as a kickoff to LMPD's "Keep Louisville Safe" campaign, which, during its first month, focused on Elder Abuse. Ms. Leibson reported that the community should be proud of its reputation as a model for coordinated response and services for elder victims – including being the only city in the nation with an In-Home EPO program for elderly and vulnerable victims who are unable to go to the court to receive these vital protections.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Mental Health Month – In recognition of Mental Health Month, Sheriall Cunningham, Director, Mental Health America of Kentucky, provided an informational brochure on issues related to stress. She reported that coping with everyday stress can have a direct effect on our overall mental health and encouraged members to review the brochure and share it with friends and colleagues.

VIII. ADJOURN/NEXT MEETING

With no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned. Judge Montano reported that the next scheduled meeting conflicts with the KBA Convention, which will be held in Louisville. The Commission meeting will be rescheduled and all members notified.