

Criminal Justice Steering Committee
May 10, 2011
Rhode Island Department of Corrections
2nd Floor Conference Room
40 Howard Avenue
Cranston, RI 02920

1. Call to Order/Welcome:

Chairman A.T. Wall welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 8:40 a.m. Director Wall noted that a quorum was present. He asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Present:

A.T. Wall, Director, Rhode Island Department of Corrections, Chair (voting member)
Public Defender John Hardiman, Office of the Public Defender (voting member)
Director Craig Stenning, Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare,
Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals (voting member)
Major James G. Pereira, representing Colonel Steven G. O'Donnell, Rhode Island State
Police (voting member)
Assistant Attorney General Stacey Veroni, Rhode Island Department of Attorney
General, representing Attorney General Peter Kilmartin (voting member)
Ms. Marisa White, representing The Honorable Alice B. Gibney, Presiding Justice,
Superior Court of Rhode Island (voting member)
Mr. Michael Burke, designee of Interim Director Kevin Aucoin, Department of Children,
Youth, & Families, (voting member)
Mr. Anthony Robinson, Policy Office, Rhode Island House of Representatives
Ms. Danica Iacoi, Rhode Island Department of Public Safety Legal Counsel
Ms. Gina Caruolo, Rhode Island Department of Corrections
Dr. Jeffrey, Senese, Johnson & Wales University
Mr. Thomas Mongeau, Public Safety Grants Administration Office
Mr. David LeDoux, Public Safety Grants Administration Office
Mr. Joseph Persia, Public Safety Grants Administration Office

2. Approval of February 1, 2011 Minutes:

Major Pereira moved:

**TO ACCREPT THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 1,
2011 MEETING AS PRESENTED.**

Ms. Veroni seconded the motion.

**THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY IN THE
AFFIRMATIVE.**

3. Discussion of Initial Proposal of Strategic Planning Process:

Director Wall stated that Professor Senese will review his proposal. Once his work is completed and recommended for approval by the Steering Committee, it will then be

presented to the Policy Board for its approval. Director Wall asked Mr. Mongeau to introduce Dr. Senese.

Dr. Senese said that he would be creating a planning/assessment document that will be used by the Criminal Justice Steering Committee. A first step would be to collect documents that currently exist, talk to each of the agencies, and then create a final document. The Steering Committee is asking for an actionable document that would require discussions with all affected agencies. Once approved, he will also build a team consisting of state agencies and public and private colleges, so that the document could be sustainable. He suggested reviewing the final document about every five years to refine it. The Steering Committee can also assess the impact of the plan as well as evaluate pieces of the plan.

Director Wall asked if anyone had any questions. Mr. Hardiman asked if this is a long-range plan, and how will the Steering Committee deal with the current funding situation. Mr. LeDoux responded that the Public Safety Grants Administration Office (PSGAO) does not currently have a funding allocation for the Byrne/JAG Grant. They have received some preliminary advice from the Bureau of Justice Assistance that the state will receive an approximate 17 percent cut over last year's funding. However, the PSGAO does not know when this notification will be received, but that it may possibly be this spring. He further explained that they generally have an idea of the funding they will receive, but not this year. Dr. Senese stated that it would be too rushed to have a plan in place for this year's funding cycle, but that the plan would be available for future years.

Director Wall asked if there are immediate funding decisions that are required by this committee regarding Byrne/JAG. Mr. LeDoux said there are none at this time. The strategic planning document would probably be available for the 2012 funding cycle. He stated that the Steering Committee would use its previous survey that was developed to distribute Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ERRA) funds. He further explained that there is enough ERRA money for the next funding cycle, due to the late start of programs. However, some programs will need continuation money, and this committee will have to decide who would receive continuation funds. He also explained that Rhode Island will likely see cuts to next year's budget as Congress deals with the budget deficit. Director Wall added that at that point, a strategic plan will be very important as the committee deals with potential cuts in federal grants.

Director Wall asked Dr. Senese about a timeline to develop a strategic plan and implement it. Dr. Senese said the plan would be developed during the month of June. The actual collecting of interview data would take place in the fall. He will work on drafts of the plan during the winter, and expects to have an actionable plan by February 2012.

Major Pereira thanked Dr. Senese for his efforts on behalf of the state. He asked if Dr. Senese had been able to recruit some volunteers. Dr. Senese said he has recruited some volunteers from Johnson & Wales University, and he believes he can get some additional volunteers from other colleges and universities.

Director Wall stated that this plan is being developed for the State of Rhode Island at no cost. On behalf of the Steering Committee, he thanked Dr. Senese and Johnson & Wales University for their efforts. He said that it is important that we develop a strategic plan at this time, however, there are no funds available to do so. He stated that the committee and the state is grateful to Johnson & Wales and asked Dr. Senese what he needs from this committee to proceed.

Dr. Senese responded that he and Mr. Mongeau will set up meetings with the agencies involved and begin collecting data with a team. Director Wall stated that he envisions that once Dr. Senese has something to present, the committee will reconvene and approve the plan, which will then go to the full Policy Board for its approval.

Mr. Hardiman asked if the committee has options within a plan, and Dr. Senese said that will come about in conversations with the agencies.

Director Wall asked for a motion.

Ms. White thanked Dr. Senese for his service. Ms. White moved:

**TO ACCEPT DR. SENESE'S RECOMMENDATION TO
MEET WITH AFFECTED AGENCIES AND DEVELOP
OPTIONS FOR A PLANNING DOCUMENT TO BE
THEN PRESENTED TO THE STEERING COMMITTEE.**

Mr. Hardiman seconded the motion.

**THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY IN THE
AFFIRMATIVE.**

4. Discussion of 2011 Victims Assistance (VOCA) Grant Program:

Mr. Mongeau provided an overview of the VOCA Grant. He stated that this grant program has not been reviewed by this committee since 2004. He is asking for the Steering Committee to review the planning process for this grant program.

He stated that the VOCA Grant is funded through fines and fees, and the program has a three-year funding cycle. In 1997, the grant tripled, which was due to a one-time fine.

The following year the grant received its usual funding. Since 1997 it has remained at the higher amount. The PSGAO would grant out the oldest money first, and then set aside the other two years' funding to ensure continuity. Last cycle the PSGAO granted out 2008 funding and set aside 2009 and 2010. The Steering Committee and Policy Board felt this was important to do. It is now time to advertise the Request for Proposals (RFP) to eligible agencies. Mr. Mongeau recommended taking the three years of funds available, calculate the average, and make that amount available for the RFP. He also recommended keeping aside two years of funding as an insurance policy. Therefore, there is \$1,638,186 available for distribution in this RFP. Last year VOCA distributed \$1.4 million, and each agency took a 10 percent cut. This year's funds availability would put grantees back to last year's amount without the 10 percent cut.

Mr. Mongeau asked for approval from the Steering Committee to publish the RFP to eligible state agencies and private, non-profit agencies for funding to begin on October 1, 2011. He requested advertising an availability of funding in the amount of \$1,638,186. That would leave \$3.2 million remaining to ensure the same amount of funding will be available for the next two years.

Mr. Persia explained that the PSGAO has not received a confirmed amount for this year's allocation at this time, and he requested averaging the actual amount into this year's average as well. Mr. Mongeau responded that his figure assumes level funding for this year. Mr. Persia's proposal is to use the average of the actual amount for three years.

Major Pereira then moved:

TO TAKE AVERAGE OF THE THREE YEARS' LEVEL-FUNDED AMOUNT OF \$1,638,186 AND MAKE THAT AMOUNT AVAILABLE FOR THE RFP.

Director Stenning seconded the motion.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY IN THE AFFIRMATIVE.

5. **New Business:** None

Director Wall stated that the Steering Committee would likely meet again sometime this summer.

6. Adjourn:

There being no further business, Director Stennning moved:
TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

Mr. Burke seconded the motion.

**THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY IN THE
AFFIRMATIVE, AND THE MEETING WAS
ADJOURNED AT 9:05 A.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara J. Laird
Recorder

Approved by:

Thomas Mongeau
Administrative Manager

A.T. Wall, Director
R.I. Department of Corrections
Chair