Commission on Juvenile Justice Reform & Emerging & Best Practices Minutes

November 6, 2024
3-5pm
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:00pm by Chair Judge Davis.

Commission members began introductions.

II. Opening Remarks from President Bill Ferguson and Speaker Adrienne Jones

Commission members paused introductions to allow President of the Senate Bill Ferguson and Speaker of the House of Delegates Adrienne Jones to speak.

III. Commissioner and Commission Staff Introductions

Commission members resumed and finished introductions.

The Commission paused for a three-minute break to get refreshments.

IV. Chair's Welcome and Opening Remarks

Chair Judge Davis emphasized the expansive nature of the Commission and the diversity of background, expertise, and experiences of the Commission members.

The Commission will work to review data and practices and develop recommendations for elected officials, courts, the Governor, and related agencies to improve services for children in the state. The Commission will also work on identifying practices to stop juveniles from entering the justice system altogether.

V. Commission Overview

Chair Judge Davis went over the Open Meetings Act and explained that all Commission meetings will fall under the Act. Meetings will be recorded, minutes will be kept, and the Commission will operate under Robert's Rules of Order.

Bethany Young mentioned other staff members of the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy that will assist with the Commission, and reviewed the legislative mandate.

Chair Judge Davis went over Commission operations. Commissioners are expected to actively participate. Those appointed by the Governor are required to attend at least 50% of Commission meetings. Commissioners are encouraged to attend meetings in person.

Meetings are required to be held at least six times a year. Commissioners should expect to set aside at least two hours for every meeting.

A draft Commission manual with procedures was referenced, and Commissioners were encouraged to review it and make suggestions.

Chair Judge Davis asked Commissioners to fill out a worksheet ranking their workgroup preferences and to contact GOCPP staff if they are interested in becoming the Vice Chair or Secretary of the Commission.

The Commission has five proposed workgroups.

1. Fatality Review
2. Juvenile Justice Processes and System Coordination
3. Treatment and Services
4. Public Education and Narrative Change

Aubrey Edwards-Luce asked where the prevention of youth entering the justice system would fit into the workgroups. Chair Judge Davis responded that it would fit into any of the workgroups.

Chair Judge Davis continued explaining the Commission workings. Each workgroup will have two co-chairs chosen by the Commission Chair. The Commission must deliver a report to the Governor and General Assembly by October 1st of every year. Each Commissioner appointed by the Governor has been appointed for either one, two, or three years. Only the Commission Chair will speak on behalf of the Commission.

Secretary Lopez asked if the workgroups will be staffed. Chair Judge Davis replied that the workgroups will be staffed by the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy.

Del. J. Sandy Bartlett asked about future meeting times. Chair Judge Davis mentioned tentative dates and told the Commission that the workgroups will meet more frequently than the Commission at the discretion of the workgroup chairs.

Chair Judge Davis announced that proxies are allowed to attend Commission meetings in place of a Commissioner, but may not vote on behalf of the Commissioner.

VI. Discussion

Secretary Vincent Schiraldi asked if meetings were expected to take place at a regularly scheduled time. Chair Judge Davis replied that meetings will typically take place from four to six pm.

Del. J. Sandy Bartlett asked if there is a time frame for work group assignments. Chair Judge Davis replied that the assignments of Vice Chair, Secretary, and workgroup chairs and membership will be completed by noon on the 28th of November.

Aubrey Edwards-Luce asked if meetings will always be held at the same place. Chair Judge Davis answered that the primary location will be at the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy office, but meetings will be held around the state to ensure geographic diversity.

Secretary Vincent Schiraldi offered to have one of the Commission meetings at a Department of Juvenile Services facility.

Sheriff Donald L. Baker asked if the workgroup meetings are required to comply with the Open Meetings Act. Chair Judge Davis responded that the workgroup meetings are subject to the Open Meetings Act, and reminded Commissioners that they may have to review confidential information in fulfilling their duties. Commission members must take precautions to protect confidential information.

Del. N. Scott Phillips, Esq. asked if Commission members could reach out to GOCPP staff for additional research and support. Chair Judge Davis replied Commission members can contact GOCPP staff for any information they might need.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:20pm.