

Council on Corrections
June 20, 2017

Present: Richard Senato, Rev. Ty Johnson, Edwin Perez and Jane Hovington

The meeting opened late because we didn't have a quorum.

Rev. Ty Johnson was concerned about the fact we don't have representation from the Department of Corrections. What vehicle do we use to allow officers and inmates to grieve and provide the opportunity to discuss the matters with the Commissioner? There are questions requiring an answer and failure to have anyone here to respond to the questions is frustrating. There was discussion pertaining to the last meeting and the discussion regarding attendance of the commissioner and/or his representative. There was evidently by the comments made some miscommunication regarding the meeting. There were some unique dynamics at this time. The former commissioner provided us with information and statistics to enable us to make suggestions. Edwin Perez stated we need to be patient and take into consideration all that is happening as a result of the incident earlier this year. The people felt comfortable talking with us.

Richard Senato said we can't always act on the information we receive and all we can do is forward it to the Commissioner and staff. The department has to act on these things they have the logistics and data. We can check to see if there is a pattern then perhaps we can make some suggestions. We should need from some of the correction officers as well as the public. There may be things that we can do to help both sides and once we are more organized there are training attitudes that are not being done which should be done. This will help settle things down, because it deals with psychology and attitudes. Jamie can provide us with factual information. On the other hand if we have a question for the commissioner or his designee, we cannot ask anything. I am going to ask the Commissioner to have someone here to respond to the questions. Richard Senato said he would talk to the Commissioner and ask him to have someone present. Jane Hovington stated this was the third meeting. By the next meeting we should have something. We are in limbo and it is unfair, but let's not get discouraged. Jane Hovington says it is frustrating to have a meeting just to have a meeting. Richard concurred saying we are stagnated and we need to be in touch with the Commissioner. Richard again stated he would be in contact with the commissioner and send us an email to let us know his response.

Rev. Ty Johnson stated that we were appointed by the Governor and we need to be in contact with him to find out what the Governor wants from us. We need to hear from the Governor as to his expectations of this committee. As to how this counsel can help him as we work with the commissioner.

Edwin Perez stated all this in the process and reiterated we have always been provided the information, Lydia from the Governor's office says she is going to meet with us to discuss the future of the council. We need to have the conversation as to the future of the Commission. Determining where we are, where we are headed and what is expected. There is a high level of confidentiality which prevents us from some information. We need to get out to the public some of the positive information coming from the prison on the programs they have instituted. Jane Hovington stated it is imperative that we speak with the Commissioner or his representative in order for us to be effective and provide him some of the information we have obtained regarding situations within the prison.

Richard Senato said he would meet with the commissioner and ask him to come to the meeting and discuss with us the future and his ideas on how he feels about the council and our working together. The first step is to talk with the commissioner and come up with scenarios and then set up a meeting with the Governor. It has be a traumatic few months and there is much you are not aware of and I know because of my connections with the departments. I don't say much about it, but I try to be help. We can be a very dynamic help to the department and we need to rebuild.

We then discussed our scheduled meetings and when we needed to meet again. Richard stated he would include the meeting dates in the next agenda he prepared. The next meeting is July 20, 2017. There was discussion on the meeting dates and attendance. Edwin Perez asked that we insure that Tammy Menard is receiving the notices of the meeting and ask her to send out the notice of the meetings as she did previously. Richard said he would check to make sure she is getting the information.

Richard Senato asked if there was any further information to be brought to the council. Rev. Johnson discussed some issues in his community regarding probation and parole and how things have changed since the training last year. He has some concerns regarding 12/12; he has 15 sex offenders on his block. There have not been many complaints, but it looks as if this has become a dumping ground and I need to know is there is a lack of housing or what the problem is.

Jane Hovington asked about the IADAPT program and what is going on with the program. Richard Senato stated these questions are the things we need to bring up at the next meeting. He further stated we need to attend some of these programs and become aware of how they function.

Jane Hovington made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Rev. Ty Johnson. Meeting adjourned.