**Reentry Advisory Council (RAC)**

1st Quarter 2018 Meeting Minutes

Department of Corrections Headquarters

Thursday, February 22, 2018

**Attendees Present:**

Chairman Louis Reine, LA-AFL-CIO

Joseph Ardoin, Jr., LA State Building and Construction Trades Council

Rhett Covington, Dept of Public Safety and Corrections

Joseph Hollins, Proxy for Ava Dejoie, Louisiana Workforce Commission

Bridget Dinvaut, Louisiana District Attorney’s Association (Telephone Conference)

Judge Jules D. Edwards, III, 15th Judicial District Court

Robert D. Hanser, University of Louisiana at Monroe (Telephone Conference)

Arthur L. Hunter, Jr., Orleans Criminal District Court (Telephone Conference)

Karissa Page, Proxy for Jennifer Katzman, Department of Health

Secretary James Le Blanc, Dept of Public Safety and Corrections

Reverend Paul R. Murray, Elayn Hunt Correctional Center

Joseph Prejean, Big Poppas Fitness Gym

Sheryl Ranatza, Committee on Parole

Stacye Falgout, Proxy for Dr. Raman Singh, Department of Public Safety and Corrections

Angela Day, Designee for Monty Sullivan, Louisiana Community and Technical College System (Telephone Conference)

Nicole Sweazy, Louisiana Housing Corporation

Lydia Scales, Proxy for Marketa Garner Walters, Department of Children and Family Services

**Absent:**

Courtney L. Baker, Louisiana Association of Business and Industry

Michael ‘Mike’ Cazes, Louisiana Sheriff’s Association

James T. Dixon, Louisiana Public Defender Board

Daniel R. Martiny, LA Senate

Steve Pylant, LA House of Representatives

**Other:**

Tamala Edwards, Aetna Better Health of Louisiana

Dennis Schrantz, MCCD, Center for Justice Innovation

**Dept of Public Safety & Corrections Headquarters Staff:**

Mary Fuentes, Committee on Parole

Amanda Mayeux, Office of Offender ReEntry

Maghen Shipley, Dept of Public Safety & Corrections

Robert Vehock, Office of Offender ReEntry

**Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order by Assistant Secretary Rhett Covington at 9:38 am.

**Roll Call**

Roll was called and a quorum was established.

**Approval of the September and December 2017 Meeting Minutes**

The September and December 2017 minutes were adopted.

**Welcome and Introductions, Louis Reine**

Mr. Reine welcomed everyone.

**Opening Remarks and Justice Reinvestment Implementation Update, James M. Le Blanc, Secretary**

* In regards to the budget, the Secretary brought up the special session that was taking place. At the local level there is a discussion of a reduced per diem of $5 per diem for sheriff’s local jail housing under the proposed budget. There would also be a cut of approximately 200 correctional officers’ positions. Secretary Le Blanc stated that he was called again yesterday (February 21st) again by the joint legislative budget committee where they proposed another 5% cut on the prison side which translates to $25 million. The solution, proposed by Secretary Le Blanc, would be furloughs at the local level. He states that this is the only way that the department can make cuts. He hopes that this will be addressed in the special session.
* In regards to the Justice Reinvestment Oversight Council, they met last Friday (February 16th) for the first time. The goal of the Oversight Council is to provide transparency in how we go about reinvesting the Justice Reinvestment funds, making sure that everyone is aware of where it is going, keeping up with data, and incorporating evidence-based programs.
* When speaking on Justice Reinvestment, he reported that the projected savings are considerably higher than originally anticipated. These savings have gone from $6 million to approximately $11-16 million which can be carried forward into the next year. He mentioned that the Commissioner and Governor will put into the preamble language of the budget language moving the savings to a bona fide account that will enable the department to use money in areas where it is needed as defined in JRI legislation. Secretary Le Blanc said that 30% of the savings goes to fill the budget gap. He also mentioned that the Commissioner and Governor hope that 30% might be incorporated to help with pay raises for correctional officers. He reported that correctional officer turnover is currently 72% in the first year. Of the other 70%, 30% will go to community reinvestment (broad at this point). The mission is to have a request for proposals (RFP) on the street y the end of May 2018. The Secretary doesn’t want it to be too specific; he would like the community to tell him what they need to accomplish their goals. He states that the 5 LA-PRI parishes are where the funds will be focused in. He reported that there will be another meeting on May 11th of the Oversight Council. He hopes to have a draft of the RFP to present to them before it goes out on the street.
* In the next couple of weeks, he will be having a sit-down meeting with East Baton Rouge parish local community organizations, the Mayor, the new Chief of Police, and other community stakeholders. At this meeting he would like to let everyone know who is coming back to the parish as well as what their needs will be. He would like everyone that serves on the Reentry Advisory Council (RAC) to be invited to every meeting (5 parish meetings, in the next 45-60 days). He believes that both LA-PRI and RAC are important as they both play an intricate role.
* He reported that he has written a position paper where he has named the cohorts of the LA-PRI “Project 20” and would like to share this paper with everyone once it is finished.
* He reported that the new reception center will be moving from Allen to Raymond Laborde Correctional Center (RLCC). He mentioned that there was a problem hiring medical and mental health staff for Allen. He states that there will be approximately 200-250 beds for reception at RLCC with Warden McCain hoping to be open in the next 2 weeks. This means that everyone from the 5 parishes of LA-PRI who is sentenced to Department of Corrections (DOC) time will go to RLCC for reception where they will decide their needs and placement. Jefferson parish will be the first parish to send their DOC offenders to RLCC for reception followed by East Baton Rouge (EBR), St. Tammany, Orleans, and Caddo. His hope is to have everyone coming through that reception center within the next 6 months.

Judge Edwards posed a question regarding the proposed cuts and the projected savings. He asked if the $11-16 million before or after the projected legislature’s cuts. Secretary Le Blanc answered that the savings are after the cuts.

Chairman Louis Reine asked how RAC fits into the puzzle of coordination. Secretary Le Blanc says that RAC can be informed by the Oversight Council of the reinvestment process. He is currently unsure of exactly how RAC as well as IST will fit in. He reported that LA-PRI’s steering team is multi-disciplinary with several members of RAC involved in IST. He mentioned that the IST reports to the RAC and that they could provide advice and insight to DOC and the Oversight Council on how the money should be spent.

Chairman Reine offered the help of the RAC with the IST as well as the Oversight Council in becoming more successful.

Chairman Reine brought up moving future RAC meetings to Prison Enterprises due to easier parking. Mr. Covington alternatively proposed blocking off the circle and reserving it for parking for RAC members on meeting days, and voiced his concern over the smaller size of the PE Conference room.

**LA-PRI Update, Dennis Schrantz, Center for Justice Innovation**

Mr. Schrantz provided everyone with a handout on the LA-PRI’s organizational structure entitled State and Local Organizational Structures.

Chairman Reine questioned St. Tammany’s involvement in the LA-PRI. Mr. Schrantz stated that although they are not the largest parish, they incarcerate more people per capita than any parish in the state. In 2011, St. Tammany had 924 releases compared to Orleans (1,300), Jefferson (1,300), EBR (900), and Caddo (1,000). St. Tammany is also the most engaged and furthest ahead of the LA-PRI parishes.

Update on parishes

The parishes are moving toward a more comprehensive annual reentry plan for their communities that addresses programs, assets (how we can leverage local funding to add to state dollars), coordinating in the community (community coordinator positions as well as Probation and Parole reentry program manager positions), performance expectations, reduction of violations and revocations, improved case plans, employment, education, housing, and behavioral health.

The Tier 1 parishes account for 40% of Louisiana’s incarcerated population and consist of Caddo, EBR, Orleans, Jefferson, and St. Tammany.

The Tier 2 parishes which account for the next 30% of Louisiana’s incarcerated population consist of Bossier, Livingston, Ouachita, Rapides, Lafayette, Calcasieu, and Terrebonne/Lafourche.

Tier 1 and Tier 2 equals 12 parishes which represent 70% of Louisiana’s prison population.

Status:

* *Lafayette*, Mr. Schrantz met with Judge Edwards who will lead the charge
* *Calcasieu*, has had a couple of meetings, they have formed up a coalition, adopted the LA-PRI framework. Mr. Schrantz will be traveling next week to work on their steering team.

Mr. Schrantz then discussed the organizational chart. The first chart, shows the implementation steering team, which reports to RAC.

On the 2nd chart he mentioned the importance of the community coordinator and how this individual will work to get resources in area.

Mr. Covington mentioned the plan for future meetings of IST will be to travel to each parish to have local and state steering teams work together.

Mr. Schrantz stated that he is working with parish people to discuss what a comprehensive plan would look like and will put something together for RAC to look at.

Judge Edwards expressed his belief that community coordinators are important for all 12 parishes as opposed to only the first 5 parishes. The Secretary stated that if possible with Justice Reinvestment funding, it will be done.

Assistant Secretary Covington stated that they are trying to keep a majority of the funds broad in order to produce a good proposal. He would like to have specific carve outs for community coordinator positions and some level of contract for data. He mentioned a need to track contracts going out, performance measures, as well as annual performance measures.

Louis Reine posed a possible solution to funding concerns by mentioning training through coordination with the local school board, technical colleges (adult education), welfare services in order to bring in other pools of money. He wanted to know where work release and its opportunity to have some of that training through that work experience fit in to this, if anywhere. Dennis Schrantz stated that he didn’t know. Mr. Reine also brought up the challenge of work release in putting people in work release in their area of projected release, and how that makes for sustainable employment.

Mr. Schrantz briefly reported on a federal grant that he is currently working on with the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement (LCLE). It is a federal grant called a Statewide Recidivism Reduction grant. They have a small planning grant (half of every other jurisdiction involved). 7 states have received this planning grant and will compete against each other to receive the 3 implementation grants which will be up to $1 million the first year, with a potential total of $3 million implementation over 3 years. With this funding we can start to leverage because it allows us to prove the concept that when there are additional resources the outcome is better. He expressed a need to get smarter about how to communicate impacts (both positive and negative) to folks who control the perks. He has devised a cross-section team from both IST and LCLE including Sheriff Webre, Bridget Dinvaut, a victim’s representative, etc to provide oversight.

Chairman Reine mentioned trying to coordinate some of the work releases with some training that would articulate into continuing training post-release that would get people up the economic ladder including apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, which would enable them to transfer into a program once released.

**TIGER Update, Robert Vehock, Louisiana State University**

In regards to the timeline until completion of the TIGER tools, LSU is almost done with testing the algorithm, etc. He stated that LSU will continue to test the TIGER at least once a year as they continue to refine the tool. He added that he hopes to have the institutional tool up and fully implemented by early summer, the supervision tool completed shortly after with the full tool live by the end of the summer (2018).

Mr. Robert Vehock then gave a presentation of the live TIGER tool.

He explained that there are 4 user groups –

1. “Viewer” (view only access – no editing capabilities)
2. “Editor” (everyone that enters assessments – courts, Probation & Parole, pre-class, classification officers, etc.)
3. “Admin user” (same functionality of above “Editor” with addition of the ability to add users)
4. “Admin super user” (total of 2 of these accounts, ability change algorithm, coefficients, values, etc.)

He mentioned that he would like to have an analytics tool which would provide a gap analysis based on information provided in TIGER.

Judge Edwards posed the question “Are there service providers in TIGER?” Assistant Secretary Covington says that there are currently none however, he would like to use a service such as 2-1-1 that could link to potential providers.

Mr. Vehock asked for volunteers to test the TIGER as well as for general input.

Secretary Le Blanc asked if there was a medical assessment component in the TIGER. Mr. Covington stated that there is no medical portion, only mental health and substance abuse. Medical assessments would still need to be performed by medical staff.

**Other Business**

There was no other business.

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

Louis Reine entertained the motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was adopted by Sheryl Ranatza and was seconded by Joseph Ardoin and the meeting was adjourned at 11:06 am.

The next meeting will be held on April 26th at 9:30 AM at the *Department of Public Safety and Corrections Headquarters, 504 Mayflower Street, Baton Rouge, LA*.