



STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



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MINUTES

Of the meeting of the

RE-ENTRY TASK FORCE

June 3, 2010

The Re-Entry Task Force held a public meeting on June 3, 2010, beginning at 9:02 a.m. at the following locations:

At the Casa Grande Transitional Housing, 3955 W. Russell Road, Las Vegas, NV and video conferenced at NDOC Stewart Complex, Building 17, Conference Room, 5500 Snyder Avenue, Carson City, NV.

I. Call to Order.

The meeting was called to order by Director Howard Skolnik. The record reflects that Dr. Joel Lieberman, UNLV Department of Criminal Justice was excused but he arrived late; also Director Andrew Clinger, Department of Administration arrived late.

Also present:

Director Howard Skolnik, Department of Corrections (Chair)
Director Jerry Hafen, Department of Public Safety
Director Mike Willden, Department of Health and Human Services
Director Larry Mosley, Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation
Deputy Chief Chad Boardman, U.S. Probation Office, District of Nevada
(*representing Chief U.S. Probation Officer Christopher Hansen)

Members of the public in Carson City and Las Vegas were asked to sign in. The sign-in sheet is attached for Las Vegas. **See Exhibit A.** The sign-in sheet for Carson City is not available.

II. Introduction of Task Force. Roll was called for the Re-Entry Task Force Panel Members. Quorum present.

III. Why Improve Prison to Community Re-Entry in Nevada? (Director Skolnik)

Director Skolnik explained why we have a Re-Entry Task Force. He stated that in the 1980's over 70 percent of the prison population in the Department had been in the State for less than 6 weeks and were not residents. Today over 85 percent of the prison population are permanent residents of the State of Nevada and will remain here when they get out of prison and will use the State's resources. Director Skolnik stated that the Casa Grande Transitional Housing is the second major effort for re-entry in Nevada. There were previously two restitution centers. There was a small one located in Reno and one located in Las Vegas. The Las Vegas Restitution Center closed and the one in Reno still operates today. In 2006, the Casa Grande Transitional Housing opened with 400 beds and very little programming. A contract was let with an outside contractor to provide limited programming to the inmates that are here at Casa Grande Transitional Housing. As part of the budget reductions, that contract was recently eliminated. Director Skolnik stated that he has appointed Warden Anthony Scillia as Head of Reentry and Intermittent Sanctions. He is pursuing a number of grants. Director Skolnik then asked Warden Scillia to brief the Panel on current re-entry efforts.

Warden Scillia re-stated that we had a contract with a service provider but that contract no longer exists because of the budget reductions. He said there are currently about 185 – 190 inmates that are housed at Casa Grande Transitional Housing. Warden Scillia stated that a re-entry staff person has been moved to this location and that they are collaborating and working closely with the Las Vegas Urban League and with Job Connect to help the inmates find employment. Warden Scillia explained that inmates at Casa Grande pay rent when they get a job. He said that despite the poor job market right now, probably about 95 percent of the inmates at Casa Grande are in programming. Warden Scillia said that not only was the interest in finding the inmates jobs, but if the inmate did not have the skills or the education; and the Caseworker assessed their needs, then they were going to address that first. He said that relationships have been established with the College of Southern Nevada; Desert Rose High School (GED, Vocational Training, etc); Associated Builders Contractors (ABC) (a 4-week construction class); and Alpine Steel (a metal manufacturing industry located at High Desert State Prison) who will provide OSHA blue print reading training and welding training for Casa Grande inmates. Warden Scillia noted that the Alpine Steel headquarters and main plant is located just behind Casa Grande so it is very convenient. Warden Scillia said that we are making a strong push to collaborate with more agencies (i.e. Mental Health, DETR, Nevada Partners, Urban League) and are using Federal dollars and grant monies from FY07 and FY08 grants to pay for training. He said that in the last few months, probably over 3 million dollars in grants have been written and hopefully, we will get some of that. Warden Scillia stated that at Casa Grande they intend to emphasize post-release. He said that one of the major barriers to ex-offenders or inmates is housing (needed for proper casework, counseling, job readiness, job development, training). He said he is working on an agreement that hopefully the Board of Examiners will approve on June 8th, and that the Interim Finance Committee will also approve so that later this summer they can proceed with it.

Warden Scillia said the agreement is a collaborative effort between NDOC, DETR, Parole and Probations, Workforce Connections in the Community, and Community Based Agencies to bring services in. Warden Scillia stated that with Casa Grande Transitional Housing, we have moved away from the traditional pre-release inmate arriving 3 months to a year before release, to the post-release inmate. Warden Scillia stated how much excitement there is about the Community Based Corrections and about utilizing the resources that are already available (state agencies, Federal, etc). He stated that they are doing very similar things in the North but they are moving a bit slower. He said they will have training programs through several of the community colleges (for inmates at Nevada State Prison, Warm Springs Correctional Center, Northern Nevada Correctional Center, Lovelock Correctional Center) which will probably be starting in the next few months. He said that these programs are very similar to the ones here in the South so they will get the inmates prepared before their release. Warden Scillia stated that in the past they have done “flagging” programs where they get Department of Transportation personnel to come in and train on flagging when there are road projects; and there have been forklift training for inmates. He said that the exciting thing about the new direction is that they are reaching out to everyone. He specifically mentioned that UNLV would be evaluating what is being done to see if it is effective; if it is useful; and to determine if the recidivism rate going down as a result. He said that the College of Southern Nevada (CSN) has provided a 3-day job readiness program which all the Casa Grande inmates attend as well as the High Desert State Prison inmates and inmates at other prisons. He said the plan is that CSN will make a curriculum for NDOC and will then train our Staff so they can deliver the program at the institutions and at Casa Grande Transitional Housing. Other providers will be invited to participate such as Urban League, Metro Variant Re-Entry Program, etc. Warden Scillia stated that he felt good that we’re reaching out to not only community agencies but to higher education. Warden Scillia stated that some of the future things they would like to do is to get the inmates trained into the green technology and that they are collaborating with Workforce Connections on a solar panel training program for inmates. He said that the goal is to make sure every inmate gets some information to help them before their release. This may be difficult but he thinks it is do-able. Warden Scillia said that during the classes he runs for re-entry at High Desert State Prison (HDSP), Southern Desert Correctional Center (SDCC), Florence McClure Women’s Correctional Center (FMWCC), etc it is encouraged that we bring in community resources (welfare, housing, etc) to help deliver those classes. He said that at FMWCC there is a pre-release unit of a couple of hundred inmates and that SDCC and HDSP are about to start a pre-release unit. These pre-release units would be housed with inmates who are projected to get out in about a year and they will have ongoing services prior to release. Warden Scillia emphasized that he thinks preparing the inmates and making them more responsible for themselves prior to release is the future way of re-entry. Warden Scillia showed samples of pamphlets and packets of information that inmates about to be released will be getting.

IV. Role of the Task Force as the Re-Entry Steering Committee and Committees/Sub-Committees.

--Director Skolnik stated that the Task Force will probably meet quarterly.

--A tour of Casa Grande Transitional Housing will be available after the meeting.

--Director Skolnik stated that one of the accomplishments at today's meeting would be to identify and agree to the sub-committees. Director Skolnik stated that he saw the Task Force as being the group that will approve or disapprove the recommendations that come out of the sub-committees. Director Willden asked for clarification of the purpose of the Community Organizations sub-committee. Director Skolnik stated that the purpose is to identify and bring a formal relationship with community organizations to provide a level of support. He said that it is an agreement that inmates would be able to access agencies' facilities. Warden Scillia added that one of the goals of this Task Force is to make sure there is no duplication of services among the different agencies. Director Mosely stated that he has an overall concern with the area of Re-entry in that he has not seen a holistic re-entry program--one that deals with the cognitive behavior prior to release; and a program that deals with the most critical and urgent needs after release (housing and jobs). His concern is that Federal and community money is coming to a variety of different organization re-entry programs. He said that he had a conversation with the Undersecretary of Labor, the Governor and Director Skolnik about how a lot of Labor money was coming to the different organizations but was not strategically focused. He would really like to develop an overall strategy so that Federal entities understand that funding is related to what the goal is of this Task Force. He stated that a major concern of his is a holistic re-entry program and the funding of these programs. Director Skolnik said that he sees this group as being able to target areas and finding the money to accomplish goals. He said that as a group the Panel would advocate for money being spent for a particular group's support. He thinks that this would leverage a lot of resources to Re-entry that otherwise would not be there. Director Willden asked a follow up question about prioritizing needs. He wanted to know whether emphasis would be on jobs or housing. He stated that he didn't know what programs exist for community housing. Director Skolnik explained that one of the grants that Warden Scillia referenced is the HUD grant and that it has funds available for the homeless. Director Skolnik stated that when the inmates are released without housing, they are homeless. He said that money from this grant might be used to provide housing for parolees versus the pre-release inmates. He pointed out that it doesn't do us any good to keep someone who has not been granted parole locked up for lack of a place to go because we're still paying for all those services that we're providing on the inside without any opportunity to get out. This would provide the inmate the opportunity to get out and get into the community and get the kind of support mechanisms that are necessary for success, assistance in finding a job, opportunity to save money for housing. The data around the country says it works. Director Mosley says that during a summit with his Workforce Solutions unit a former long term inmate made a statement saying he was pardoned but could not find a job. Director Mosley stated that we need to be able to have

within a re-entry program, a program that will assist hard to serve inmates in developing entrepreneurial skills. He said that we will have those inmates coming out that the public will be afraid to deal with and we must be able to provide some type of mechanism (training, bonding) that will allow them to secure a job. Director Skolnik agreed that he thinks one of the future roles of the Task Force should be to take a look at what does and doesn't exist for hard to serve inmates. He says that though we can provide some of the services while they're still inside, we need to bring the services to them as well. He said that one of the goals he would like to see is a sub-committee that talks about legislation. Regarding the discussion of Casa Grande Transitional Housing, Director Clinger asked if we were talking about changing Casa Grande Transitional Housing from a pre-release to a post release facility? Director Skolnik explained that we are talking about expanding Casa Grande Transitional Housing's role. He said that we are now doing intermediate sanctions with probationers to keep them from coming in at all (A tool for keeping prisoners out of prison). For parole and probationers, Warden Scillia stated that the OPEN Probation Diversion program is used as a sanctions tool by the judges. He said that currently there is one inmate housed at Casa Grande Transitional Housing for 90 days and there are 16 total in the program. Director Skolnik stated that there are two things that we are considering using Casa Grande Transitional Housing for:

--Bringing those inmates who have been identified as mentally ill to this facility for a period of time to transition them to the Health and Human Services before they are put back on the street; and

--Development of intermediate sanctions. If inmates are under 120 days to their release, instead of bringing parole violators back to High Desert State Prison, they would be brought to Casa Grande Transitional Housing.

Director Skolnik stated that we lost 340 million dollars in construction during the last Legislative session; and we have about 1,000 beds in the Department that are not being utilized. We have furloughs coming effective July 1st which will also impact operations so we are looking at using available resources differently than in the past. Director Skolnik stated that he is hopeful that this group will help make decisions about what will be effective, but also ensure that elected officials will be supportive.

Identify potential sub-committee membership.

Director Clinger asked for a review of the scope of the six sub-committees. Director Skolnik gave a brief summary of the expected goals of each of the following sub-committees:

- Mission and Goals
- Community Organizations
- Grants and Funding
- New Initiatives and Benchmarks
- Evaluation, Data and Research

Creation of a 24-month “Strategic Plan.”

Director Mosley stated that he has been benchmarking several states for Best Practices. He stated that he has found that states such as Texas have a massive reentry program and hopes that this initiative will include looking at Best Practices reentry programs and from there the evaluation of that to see how it would fit here. Warden Scillia agreed that we don't want to re-invent the wheel. He said that Michigan and Oregon also have very good programs. There are models that we can take from. Director Wilden asked if all inmates exit from Casa Grande Transitional Housing. Director Skolnik replied that they do not and he stated that we are now getting inmates in who are eligible for parole during intake. We need to consider what services (if any) we can provide to this group of inmates. Warden Scillia stated that another group we need to provide services for are the under 18 group. Dr. Lieberman recommended that we have a sub-committee for Best Practices. Director Skolnik then asked the Panel to look at the suggested sub-committees on the Agenda and to provide any suggested additions/eliminations. Sub-committees for Legislation and for Best Practices were recommended to be added. The group agreed.

It was decided that sub-committee chairs will be selected at a later date. Members in attendance volunteered for the sub-committee as listed below:

Mission and Goals – Director Skolnik

Community Organizations – Director Wilden; Director Mosley (Warden Scillia will assist); Mr. Arberry

Grants and Funding – Director Mosley, Director Hafen, Director Clinger, Director Wilden; Mr. Arberry

New Initiatives and Benchmarks – Director Clinger

Evaluation, Data and Research – Director Hafen, Dr. Lieberman, Ms Shaffer

Creation of a 24-month “Strategic Plan.” – All Members

Legislation – Director Skolnik; Attorney General representative

Best Practices – Director Mosely; Dr. Lieberman,

Director Skolnik suggested that we reach out to community organizations and ask them where they would like to participate as opposed to putting people on committees. Deputy Chief Boardman will confer with Chief U.S. Probation Officer Hansen on which subcommittee he wants to participate on.

How the Federal Government is a partner in this state effort in re-entry.

Deputy Chief Boardman stated that per Chief U.S. Probation Officer Hansen, they are trying to explore how they can become a meaningful partner with state agencies. At this point, they are not sure what that partnership will look like or what they can do to provide some insight to the group. He does know that their Administrative Office is providing a budget operating code for re-entry services which has never occurred before. He says that it allows them some latitude to provide some transitional services to people and some emergency services which was never possible before. They have a small amount of money this year and next fiscal year they are expecting more money. They are hoping they can use some of this money to help this process.

Director Mosley stated that he thinks that we do need to have the ability to communicate directly with federal funding sources such as the Department of Justice and the Department of Labor and have someone specifically responsible to communicate via the Governor, to these agencies so we will have a little more weight when we start funding. Director Skolnik stated that he thinks that this task force is that vehicle.

The Task Force will identify “low-hanging fruit” – improvements that can be made now and don’t require additional funding.

Director Skolnik stated that the “Low Hanging Fruit” referenced in the Agenda is pretty limited. We’re talking about the OPEN program (intermediate sanctions for probationers), developing intermediate sanctions for parolees; interdicting parolees near the end of their sentences to Casa Grande Transitional Housing as opposed to prison; developing a coordinated effort on mental health inmates with the help of Health and Human Services. He stated that as far as improvements that can be done without additional funding unless somebody has ideas, that’s where we are right now. He then opened the floor for suggestions.

Director Willden stated that the guide may have been printed with some obsolete material in it. He said that his agency has some systems coming online that is an opportunity to get some of this information automated (211 system; a system called AMPS). He stated that if NDOC could limit the number of inmate release points, it they might benefit from these systems. Director Skolnik stated that we can probably limit the exit points and that this might possibly be a “low hanging fruit.” Warden Scillia stated that High Desert State Prison releases the highest amount of inmates per month and would probably be a good place to start. He stated that NDOC has entered into an agreement with the Social Security Administration to renew or get social security cards for the inmates. He also said that NDOC will be processing inmates for disability income in the next couple of months and that we are only the second state to do this (California is the first). The plan is for the Social Security Administration to bring in doctors and psychologists to evaluate the inmates. Director Mosley offered his agency’s assistance in getting this system set up or trained.

V. “Suggested Steps in starting a Re-entry Initiative”

Warden Scillia re-stated some of the ongoing activities mentioned previously and said that what we’re extensively doing is using our existing resources. He said the funding we have now comes mostly from the 07 and 08 grants. He said that most of the grants that have been written, we are going to partner with community organizations (not hiring staff) to provide services to the inmates. He said that we have a number of grants that are pending.

VI. Discuss Re-entry funding opportunities:

The group decided that funding opportunities would be developed by the sub-committees.

VII. Next Meeting Date:

Tentatively Scheduled for September. Date to be determined.

VIII. Public Comments:

None

IX. Adjourned at 10:10 a.m., June 3, 2010.

EXHIBIT A

NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
 RE-ENTRY TASK FORCE MEETING
 JUNE 3, 2010
 ATTENDANCE ROSTER - LAS VEGAS, NV

	NAME (please print)	Organization	Request to Speak	
			Yes	No
1	Maxine Blackwell	DOC	-	No
2	Bradford Glover	DOC	-	No
3	MICHAEL STEWART	LVMPP	-	No
4	Mike Fletcher	LUVU	-	No
5	Fred McDowell	Defa		No
6	Deb Shaffer	UNLV		No
7	Joel Ciccerone	UNLV		No
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