Colorado Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice

Sentencing Reform Task Force MINUTES

January 12, 2022 / 1:30PM-4:00PM Virtual Meeting

ATTENDEES

TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Rick Kornfeld, TF Co-chair/Defense Attorney

Michael Dougherty, Task Force Co-chair, District Attorney/20th Judicial District

Taj Ashaheed, Second Chance Center

Maureen Cain, Office of the State Public Defender

Chad Dilworth, Adult Parole Board

Christie Donner, Colorado Criminal Justice Reform Coalition

Valerie Finks, Victim Compensation Program/DA Office, 1st Judicial District

Kazi Houston, Rocky Mountain Victim Law Center

Jessica Jones, Defense Attorney

Sarah Keck, Court Services/Judicial Branch

Brian Mason, District Attorney/17th Judicial District

Andrew Matson, Colorado CURE

Greg Mauro, Denver Division of Community Corrections

Heather McClure, Adams County Division of Community Safety & Well-Being

Tom Raynes, Colorado District Attorneys' Council

Michael Rourke, District Attorney/19th Judicial District

Dan Rubinstein, District Attorney/21st Judicial District

Glenn Tapia, Director, Div. of Probation Services/Judicial Branch

Lisa Wayne, Defense Attorney

Dean Williams, Colorado Department of Corrections

GUESTS

STAFF

Richard Stroker, CCJJ Consultant

Jack Reed, Interim Research Director, Division of Criminal Justice Laurence Lucero, Sentencing Reform Task Force Staff, Division of Criminal Justice Stephane Waisanen, Sentence Structure Working Group Staff, Division of Criminal Justice

Kevin Ford, Commission Staff, Division of Criminal Justice

ABSENT

Terri Carver, State Representative/House District 20 Bob Gardner, State Senator/Senate District 12 Julie Gonzales, State Senator/Senate District 34 Serena Gonzales-Gutierrez, State Representative/House District 4 Henry Jackson, Metro State University

Welcome & Agenda

Welcome, Approval of Minutes, and Agenda Rick Kornfeld, Task Force Co-chair

Discussion

Rick Kornfeld, Task Force Co-chair, welcomed attendees and apologized for his extended work-related absence the past few months. He added that fellow Co-chair, Michael Dougherty had updated him on the work of the group to date.

Rick noted that, given the highly publicized sentencing reform issues in the news, he and Michael were concerned that the general public was unaware of the ongoing work taking place in the state, particularly through the Sentencing Reform Task Force (SRTF) and the Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice (CCJJ). He and Michael had penned and submitted an "op-ed" piece to the Denver Post that details not only the work that led to *Senate Bill 2021-271* (*Misdemeanor Reform*) during the previous legislative session, but also outlines the current, significant, bipartisan efforts underway to address many of the timely criminal justice issues in Colorado.

Rick introduced two of the newer members of the Task Force who are filling recent vacancies: elected District Attorney (DA) Brian Mason (17th Judicial District) and Chad Dilworth, Vice-chair of the Adult Parole Board.

Rick asked for a motion to approve the December 8, 2021 minutes. Glenn Tapia requested a minor change (underlined) on page 4 of the minutes: "Glenn added that <u>according to stakeholder feedback</u> a person's mental health crisis should not be solved by the criminal justice system." The minutes were revised and members moved, seconded and unanimously approved the Dec. 8, 2021 minutes. Rick reviewed the agenda which included updates from the Working Groups and the presentation of four recommendations.

Issue/Topic

General Update and Scope of Work: Sentencing Alternatives/Decisions & Probation Working Group Glenn Tapia, WG Leader

Discussion

Sentencing Alternatives/Decisions & Probation Working Group General Update and 2022 Scope of Work.

Glenn relayed that Megan Ring expressed concerns regarding the scope of work at a recent Working Group meeting, and he believed the issue should be discussed with the Task Force. Megan reported concerns that the Working Group might be working outside the original scope of work or that the topics addressed might be misaligned with the scope. Glenn shared a slide outlining the original Working Group Scope of Work, which had been finalized in December 2020. He also provided a brief status update on items #1, #2 and #7 (below), and asked Task Force members whether the scope should be revised or realigned.

2021 Scope of Work approved by SRTF and reviewed by the Commission:

- Define statutory purpose of probation
 This topic has been completed and a recommendation was approved by the Commission (Recommendation FY22-SR #01. Define the Purposes of
- 2. Evaluate probation level of supervision in the interest of proper dosage and approaches (e.g., avoiding over supervision)

 The Working Group submitted a petty offense-related recommendation

Probation).

General Update and Scope of Work: Sentencing Alternatives/Decisions & Probation Working Group Glenn Tapia, WG Leader (continued) (FY22-SR #02. Develop a Swift Reparative Intervention Program for Persons Convicted of a Petty Offense) in response to this topic that was returned by the SRTF to the WG, which subsequently removed the recommendation from further consideration. The WG will examine the sex offender intensive supervision program and develop a proposal that will address over- and under-supervision.

- 3. Examine probation practices regarding the use of conditions, length of supervision, responses to violations, and revocations

 Work pending.
- 4. Examine impact of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) in revocations and other outcomes and recommend strategies to better accommodate persons with TBI

Work pending.

Examine ethnic and gender disparities in probation outcomes/practices and recommend strategies to abate disparate treatment and/or outcomes

Work pending.

- **6. Examine impact on prison populations** Work pending.
- 7. Consider alternatives that can be utilized at the time of sentencing Glenn again referenced *Recommendation FY#22-SR #02. Develop a Swift Reparative Intervention Program,* which fell within this topic area but has been removed from further consideration.

Glenn asked for feedback and/or guidance from the Task Force on the Scope of Work:

- Maureen felt that some of the Working Group recommendations presented to date did not fit the Scope of Work, including the recommendation that involved the Office of Behavioral Health (*Recommendation FY22-SR #04. Improve Collaborative Treatment for Justice-Involved People*). She added that the "Swift Reparative Intervention" proposal was inappropriately directed to petty offenders, rather than exploring options for misdemeanants. Aside from these two issues, Maureen supported the other elements in the Scope of Work.
 - Glenn explained that the OBH-related recommendation was in response to feedback that the quality of and access to behavioral health (e.g., lack of behavioral health in communities, telehealth, etc.) was a major impediment to successful completion of probation.
- Lisa Wayne asked for more background on the concerns expressed regarding the scope of work. Glenn responded that the concerns were general in nature, indicating that topics addressed seemed out of scope, but not why the topics were out of scope or what topics should be addressed instead.
- Christie Donner inquired about a possible evaluation of the Judicial Correctional Treatment Cash Fund (CTCF) and whether those funds are being utilized effectively. She asked whether that type of evaluation would fit within the current scope of work, and, if not, whether it might be expanded to include that work.

Update: Sentence Structure Working Group Michael Dougherty, WG Leader

ACTION

The Task Force's full, comprehensive, general felony package is anticipated for completion for the 2023 legislative session.

Discussion

Sentence Structure Working Group

Michael thanked Rick for the summary he provided at the start of the meeting. He observed that there is no better place for discussions and collaboration to occur around criminal justice and sentencing issues than in the Sentence Structure Working Group, Sentencing Reform Task Force and the CCJJ.

General Felony Sentencing and Offenses

Michael referred to the initial plan by the Working Group to offer a "General Felony" Sentencing and Offenses proposal, which included new sentencing ranges and general felony levels, to be completed for the 2022 legislative session. That was to be followed by an "Enhanced" Felony Sentencing and Offenses proposal (also with sentencing ranges and felony levels) by the 2023 legislative session. However, given the timeframe, the plan has shifted to develop a comprehensive proposal that will include all the felony categories for the 2023 legislative session.

Michael explained that one piece of the general felony work included the creation of a crime severity chart, which assigned all general felonies to a new felony classification structure (five felony levels, rather than the current six levels). While that work was fairly straightforward, a related aspect was more challenging than anticipated - determining the associated sentencing ranges for each of the five new felony levels. Complicating this task was the integration of habitual sentencing penalties into the new sentencing structure.

Michael next addressed the importance of building more certainty and consistency into the sentencing system, while simultaneously avoiding the unintended consequence of lengthening prison sentences. Achieving certainty in sentencing is challenging due to the related issues of discretionary parole release and mandatory consecutive sentences. Michael summarized that, without having resolved these outstanding issues of habitual sentencing, discretionary parole and mandatory consecutive sentences, it would have been extremely difficult to build consensus and finalize the "General Felony" proposal in time for the 2022 legislative session. He reiterated that the Working Group plans to present a complete proposal comprising all felony sentences in the months ahead in preparation for the 2023 legislative session

"Clean-up" Bill

Michael reminded the group that *Senate Bill 2021-271* has an implementation date of March 2022, and the purpose of the implementation delay was to allow for the identification of gaps, omissions and/or mistakes in an extraordinarily detailed 350-page bill. The "Clean-up" bill is part of that effort and Michael emphasized that the bill will be consistent with the proposals previously approved by the SRTF and the Commission. The bill solely addresses technical, non-controversial revisions that will not be forwarded through the Commission process, but will be drafted by various agencies and stakeholders.

Michael indicated that one aspect of the "Clean-up" bill, regarding Possession of Weapons by Previous Offenders (POWPO), would be a stand-alone proposal

Update: Sentence Structure
Working Group
Michael Dougherty, WG Leader
(continued)

that he will describe later in the meeting. A separate POWPO provision that will also be included in the "Clean-up" bill is specific to juveniles adjudicated for offenses that have a prohibition on possession of a firearm. This item was previously approved by the Task Force and the Commission, but was inadvertently excluded from *S.B. 21-271*. That provision, which prohibits the possession of a weapon, automatically sunsets in ten years after the completion of sentence, or earlier if granted by the court upon a petition for good cause (foe example, someone trying to enter the military with a juvenile offense on their record).

It is hoped the "Clean-up" bill with all its corrections will be passed by the legislature and signed by the Governor before March 1, 2022 when *S.B. 21-271* becomes effective. Michael mentioned that Task Force members will receive copies of the "Clean-up" bill upon its completion.

Discussion

Maureen highlighted that the decision to delay the "general" and other felony work to the 2023 legislative session as a complete package was made after hours of discussion and deliberation informed by stakeholder feedback and the review of an enormous amount of data.

Glenn asked about the sentencing-related recommendations to be considered later in the meeting and whether these are separate from, but complementary with, the complete felony sentencing package slated for completion in 2023. Michael replied that the items for consideration later are ancillary to, but will integrate with, the subsequent comprehensive efforts forthcoming for 2023.

ACTION

The Working Group will confer with Mr. Williams and CDOC representatives to discuss parole supervision and other topics included in the delayed "General Felony" proposal

Referring to provisions in the delayed "General Felony" proposal, Glenn asked Dean Williams (Executive Director, CO Department of Corrections; CDOC) about the effect on parole division practices stemming from proposed changes to revocation for technical parole violations, prison release procedures and aggravated sentences for new crimes (committed while on parole). Dean replied that he is very interested in working with members of the Working Group and stakeholders on these provisions, but that he didn't have enough information to provide a response.

Michael offered that he and Rick could meet with Dean and Ruth Coffman (Deputy Executive Dir., CDOC) to discuss next steps for the SRTF and the Sentence Structure Working Group regarding the proposal.

Issue/Topic

Final Presentation:
Recommendations FY22-SR #06,
FY22-SR #07, and FY22-SR #08
Sentence Structure Working Group
Michael Dougherty, WG Leader

Discussion

Michael offered a presentation of three recommendations (*FY22-SR #06, FY22-SR #07*, and *FY22-SR #08*) from the Sentence Structure Working Group, noting that, if they so desire, Task Force members could vote on the recommendations today or the vote can be delayed until the next SRTF meeting on January 26, 2022. The title of each recommendation and a brief description are provided below, followed by background on and/or the rationale of the proposal, along with discussion highlights and vote outcomes.

Final Presentation:
Recommendations FY22-SR #06,
FY22-SR #07, and FY22-SR #08
Sentence Structure Working Group
Michael Dougherty, WG Leader

ACTION

The SRTF will provide a preliminary presentation of Recommendations FY22-SR #06, FY22-SR #07, and FY22-SR #08 to the Commission on January 14, 2022

FY22-SR #06. Revise Penalties for Unauthorized Practice of Certain Professions or Occupations [Statutory]

Recommendation FY22-SR #06

Amend §12-20, C.R.S., to include a new statutory section with additional professions, the practice of which without a license, should be a felony due to a public safety risk.

Background

Michael began by explaining that the WG goal is to eliminate "second and subsequent offenses" entirely to ensure that such conduct and penalties are captured otherwise within the offense statutes, rather than as separate offenses. Prior to *S.B. 21-271*, many offenses listed in §12-20, C.R.S., were primarily misdemeanor offenses that were raised to a felony level for second and subsequent offenses. He noted that many of these Title 12 offenses under *S.B. 21-271* would be categorized as Class 2 misdemeanors; however, upon further examination, some of the crimes are serious enough, upon the first offense, to be categorized as a felony (e.g., practicing as an electrician, professional engineer or architect without a license). Michael also emphasized that these crimes are rarely, if ever, charged.

In preparing the recommendation, the WG members reviewed all the offenses in Title 12 and identified a list of 12 crimes that are serious enough to represent felony conduct. There is one additional crime (practicing law without a license) that is still under consideration for inclusion on the list.

Discussion

- Andrew Matson inquired about the behavioral threshold for the offense and whether someone with practical knowledge or expertise on the related topics could face a felony charge for providing simple assistance (for example, helping a neighbor with electrical wiring or offering informal legal advice without being a lawyer, etc.). Michael replied that the question reflected similar WG discussions and this charge would only be applicable when someone engages in or commits fraudulent conduct by claiming authorization to practice one of these professions.
- Kazi Houston asked whether the Working Group considered adding mental health providers to the list. Michael responded that it was not discussed.
- Rick asked whether "practicing law without a license" would be included in the possible vote. Michael suggested a vote could be held on the 12 professions currently on the list. If consensus is eventually reached on the "practicing law" issue, that item could be considered at that later time.
- Maureen pointed out that "practicing law without a license" is not currently a crime in Colorado, and was wary that it should be "criminalized."

Michael asked for any additional feedback or suggestions from the Task Force and, hearing none, called for any public comment on the recommendation.

Final Presentation:
Recommendations FY22-SR #06,
FY22-SR #07, and FY22-SR #08
Sentence Structure Working Group
Michael Dougherty, WG Leader
(continued)

Hearing none, the recommendation was moved and seconded and, with no further discussion, members voted, yielding the following result:

VOTE: Recommendation FY22-SR #06. Revise Penalties for Unauthorized Practice of Certain Professions or Occupations (Statutory)

- 14 Support
- 1 Do not support
- 3 Abstain
- 1 Not voting

Rec. FY22-SR #06 was approved for submission to the Commission.

FY22-SR #07. Revise Value Basis for Theft of Public Benefits [Statutory]

Recommendation FY22-SR #07

Amend Colorado Revised Statutes related to theft of public benefits to clarify that the amount of theft is based on the amount of benefits paid for which the person is not legally entitled. More specifically, the level of criminal offense is based on the amount of benefits received by the person for which the person is not entitled and does not include the amount the person is entitled to receive.

Background

Michael explained that, under *S.B. 21-271*, it was determined that theft of public benefits should be value-based. Simply stated, if someone is entitled to \$2,000 in public benefits, but falsely claimed \$10,000, the amount stolen would be \$8,000. However, a recent appellate case in Colorado (*No. 19SC933, People v. Vidaur*) has confused how value is calculated. This recommendation is intended to clarify that theft of public benefits is based on the amount of benefits paid for which the person was not legally entitled (and does not include the amount to which the person was entitled).

Discussion

 Rick reiterated that the theft of public benefit would be the amount beyond which the person was originally entitled.

Michael asked for any additional feedback or suggestions from the Task Force and, hearing none, called for public comment on the recommendation. Hearing none, the recommendation was moved and seconded and, with no further discussion, members voted, yielding the following result:

VOTE: Recommendation FY22-SR #07. Revise Value Basis for Theft of Public Benefits (Statutory)

- 15 Support
- 0 Do not support
- 2 Abstain
- 2 Not voting

Rec. FY22-SR #07 was approved for submission to the Commission.

Final Presentation:
Recommendations FY22-SR #06,
FY22-SR #07, and FY22-SR #08
Sentence Structure Working Group
Michael Dougherty, WG Leader
(continued)

FY22-SR #08. Add Prison as an Intermediate Sanction Confinement Facility (Statutory]

Recommendation FY22-SR #08

Amend §17-2-103, C.R.S., to grant statutory authority to the executive director of the department of corrections to confine parolees in a prison facility, in addition to utilizing jails, for the purpose of confinement as an intermediate sanction for up to 14 days without filing a complaint seeking revocation of parole. This will give the department of corrections and parole officers additional options for "swift and sure" intermediate sanctions.

Background

Michael described recent statutory changes regarding technical parole violations (violations of parole rules that are not crimes) that allow a "swift and sure" sanction, namely, confinement for up to 14 days in jail without filing a parole revocation complaint (with the CO Board of Parole). This proposal would authorize CDOC the option to house these individuals in a prison facility if a jail bed is unavailable or for any other reason that jail is not a viable option.

Discussion

- Kazi Houston asked whether this procedure affects victim notification.
 Christie replied that "due process" is not involved because parole is not revoked and that "swift and sure" sanctions are a change of conditions, rather than a revocation.
- Dean supported the additional "swift and sure" housing option, but offered a friendly revision. He asked for the following underlined revision, "...CONFIMEMENT...MAY BE PROVIDED IN ANY FACILITY OPERATED OR APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS...." He described that additional placement options, such as sober living homes, would be applicable, secure, and offer more services than CDOC could provide.
- Christie Donner asked Dean to expound on the proposed revision. He
 replied that the change would enable CDOC to develop additional housing
 alternatives and/or programs that could operate within equally secure
 locations. He added that many county jails are unable to accept such
 placements due to current housing burdens. Christie and Dean agreed
 regarding the effectiveness of both sober living and relapse homes.
- Tom Raynes supported the proposal, but wanted an assurance from Dean that "confinement" of individuals in such locations was indeed securely confined. Members discussed the pros and cons of adding the word "secure" to the provision, ultimately deciding that it was not necessary.
- Tom moved and Andrew Matson seconded the approval of the recommendation and revision ("OR APPROVED BY").

Michael solicited additional discussion and, hearing none, called for any public comment on the recommendation. Hearing none and with no further discussion, members voted, yielding the following result:

Final Presentation:
Recommendations FY22-SR #06,
FY22-SR #07, and FY22-SR #08
Sentence Structure Working Group
Michael Dougherty, WG Leader
(continued)

VOTE: Recommendation FY22-SR #08. Add Prison as an Intermediate Sanction Confinement Facility (Statutory)

- 17 Support
- 0 Do not support
- 2 Abstain
- 0 Not voting

Rec. FY22-SR #08 was approved for submission to the Commission.

Issue/Topic

Preliminary Presentation: Recommendation FY22-SR #09 Sentence Structure Working Group Michael Dougherty, WG Leader

Discussion

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION FY22-SR #09. Revise Felony Offenses Eligible for the Crime of POWPO (Statutory)

Recommendation FY22-SR #09

Amend §18-12-108, C.R.S., Possession of Weapons by Previous Offenders to include additional non-VRA felony offenses.

Background

Michael offered a preliminary presentation of *FY22-SR #09* to allow members an opportunity to fully digest the proposal before a suggested final consideration at the next SRTF meeting on January 26, 2022. He reminded members of the significant changes included in *S.B. 21-271* to POWPO with a goal to avoid "over-felonizing" the POWPO crime. Previously, POWPO was an eligible charge for individuals for all previous felonies.

Michael explained that the delayed implementation of the bill on March 1, 2022 was to allow for any corrections or edits of the statutory language. The WG conducted a review of POWPO-eligible offenses and upon considering similar laws in other states and the feedback from a variety of stakeholders, including Ceasefire Colorado, concluded the following:

- Under S.B. 21-271, the POWPO-eligible offenses were reduced from every felony to felonies with direct impact on public safety. The feedback from stakeholders yielded additional felonies that should be included on the list.
- Specifically, the expanded list included 61 offenses with potential impact on public safety.
- Michael felt this represented a more complete list and pointed out that 2nd degree burglary of a dwelling was added to the list of VRA offenses.

DISCUSSION

- Dan explained that the Working Group engaged a significant number of stakeholders and he believed that this was very comprehensive effort by the SRTF and CCJJ to provide all the necessary information for bill drafting.
- Kazi believed that this is a good measure that will increase public safety and decrease the potential for new victims.
- While Maureen Cain did not unequivocally support all the offenses on the list, she praised members and stakeholders who compromised to derive the list while also considering how infrequently many of the crimes were filed. Michael Rourke agreed with Maureen regarding the list, but

Preliminary Presentation:
Recommendation FY22-SR #09
Sentence Structure Working Group
Michael Dougherty, WG Leader
(continued)

respected the compromises made by all parties and fully supported the proposal.

Michael summarized that, although lengthy, it a sound list that reflects a lot of hard work by members and stakeholders. He reiterated his request that members study the recommendation before final consideration at the next meeting and further requested that any concerns or feedback be forwarded to members of the Sentence Structure Working Group before the next meeting.

Issue/Topic Public Comment

Michael Dougherty, WG Leader

Next Steps and Adjournment

Richard Stroker, CCJJ Consultant & Michael Dougherty, WG Leader

ACTION

Sentencing Reform Task Force will present three recommendations (FY22-SR #06, FY22-SR #07, and FY22-SR #08) for preliminary consideration at the next Commission meeting on January 14

Public Comment

Michael solicited any final public comment. Mark Harris (Colorado Ceasefire) thanked Michael and Working Group members for the opportunity to be heard and to participate in the POWPO discussions. With no further public comment, Michael moved to next steps.

Conclusion

Richard Stroker, CCJJ Consultant, thanked Michael and Task Force members for their time, effort and consensus-building on these significant topics. He summarized that the three recommendations approved by the Task Force during the meeting will be forwarded to the Commission for preliminary presentation on Friday, January 14, 2022:

- Recommendation FY22-SR #06. Revise Penalties for Unauthorized Practice of Certain Professions or Occupations [Statutory]
- Recommendation FY22-SR #07. Revise Value Basis for Theft of Public Benefits [Statutory]
- Recommendation FY22-SR #08. Add Prison as an Intermediate Sanction Confinement Facility (Statutory)

Richard reminded members of the additional Task Force meeting scheduled on January 26, 2022 at 1:30pm and Michael emphasized that meeting attendance was critical to ensure timely consideration of the POWPO recommendation.

Rick thanked Mr. Harris and Colorado Ceasefire for their meaningful work and contributions. He also shared that there is broad appreciation for the hard work by and expertise of members of the WGs, SRTF, and Commission and the diversity of stakeholders on all these group. Michael seconded Rick's comment.

Michael added that the "Q & A" Session originally scheduled for January 21 was canceled. With no further business, Michael adjourned the meeting. The next (extra) meeting of the Sentencing Reform Task Force is January 26, 2022 at 1:30pm.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, January 26, 2022 / 1:30-4:00pm (Virtual meeting)

Virtual meeting information will be emailed to members and posted at, colorado.gov/ccjj/ccjj-meetings