



FAMILY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Location: Microsoft Teams Date: 11/20/2021 Time: 10AM – 3PM

Teleconference details: _____

Meeting Attendees

Department/facility co-chair: Lisa Flynn Family co-chair: Loren Taylor

Facility/council secretary: Rhonda Roberts Family secretary, if applicable: Loretta Pedersen

Members present: Susan Cooksey, SCCC Rep; Felix D'Allesandro, MCC Rep; Wendy Dubinsky, WSP Rep; Gween McIlveen CRCC Rep; Jason Rice, WCCW Rep; Stephanie Sanderson, LCC Rep; Paula Bond, MCCCW Rep

Non-council member attendees: Carrie Stanley DOC, Mike Obenland DOC, James Key DOC, Sean Murphy DOC, Heather Williams DOC, Caitlin Robertson DOC, Dawn Taylor DOC, Jeannie Darneille DOC, Cheryl Strange DOC, Jeremy Barclay DOC, Chris Poulos DOC, Sonja Hallum OCO, Eric Jackson DOC, Paige Perkinson DOC, Gheorghe Turcin DOC, Diane Doonan DOC

Agenda

Old business

Topic	Discussion/Key Points	Next Steps
1000 -- 1015 Welcome/Agenda/Review of Action Items Lisa Flynn, DOC co-chair Loren Taylor, Family co-chair	-Instructions were given for adding live closed captioning to meeting minutes. For example, *5 will allow people on phones to "raise hands/unraise hand" and *6 will mute/unmute. -A roll call of reps, "housekeeping" items -Chatbox	
1015 -- 1030 DOC LFC/SFC Elections Sean Murphy, Deputy Secretary	Family Council elections -Received quite a few emails from family members expressing concerns about the elections. Acknowledges that SFC reps need more time to consult their LFCs concerning elections, Family Council policy changes, etc. -Moving the election date to November 30 th will DOC now taking nominations for the position of co-chair and co-secretary. -Secretary Strange wants to start working on revising the policy with Family Councils right after the holidays. -Families request a clear position description with time commitment spelled out for these positions. -Loren Taylor gave families an account of time commitment for being the volunteer family co-chair. Minimum activities required by policy might take up to a couple of hours per week, but those who have more time can participate in more DOC meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin policy revision work in January with LFC/SFC groups. • Address voting in revision.

	<p>-Sean Murphy expressed commitment to consistency and improving process</p> <p>-Families ask for clarification on what the council's work during these all-day meetings is supposed to be: collaboration? Working group?</p> <p>-Sean Murphy asked families to explain how voting occurred last year. Families have concerns about the lack of transparency in elections during 2020, which were modified to be by email due to COVID and included only the reps instead of having voting occur in front of all participants in the same room together as in the past. The policy spells out who votes, but not how that voting is to occur. Address voting process in policy revision.</p> <p>-Secretary Strange acknowledges that if families have concerns about the process and the policy is vague about voting processes, transparency, job position duties, etc., faith in the council activities will be damaged. However, she expressed commitment to building trust.</p> <p>-Families express concern about a voting process that requires attending a statewide meeting to participate in voting. They would like to have a way for the local level families to participate if they cannot make that meeting and families who can't make the LFC meetings.</p> <p>-Some families would like only reps to be eligible for co-chair positions. Other families would like it to be open to others as well.</p> <p>-Families of color report experiencing an ongoing lack of support and excessive barriers to holding elected positions. Issues cited include meetings and voting opportunities not working for low-income families who work full-time and excessive dominance by families who have held officer positions or been a part of the council for many years.</p> <p>-November 26th is the date by which nominations must be received. Can submit to Lisa Flynn, Rhonda Roberts, and Loren Taylor by email.</p> <p>-Families also express concerns that our incarcerated loved ones are not being given sufficient opportunities to be part of LFC and SFC meetings, so we are missing their voices and perspectives too often.</p> <p>-Formerly incarcerated participant recommends that we eliminate elected positions entirely and make participation and representation less hierarchical.</p> <p>-Secretary Strange announces that a listserv subscription platform has been created to ensure the inclusion of a more diverse family population.</p> <p>-Families of color emphasize the importance of keeping virtual meeting options to enhance the participation of diverse families.</p>	
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	<p>-Families express concerns that policy does not spell out that reps should be asked for input when DOC and family co-chair are asking for agenda items, nor does it spell out that representatives should have a duty to solicit feedback from their LFCs.</p> <p>-One family member expressed concerns about whether a non-rep family member could vote for co-chair last year. Other families say this was not what happened, and DOC will need to check if Public Records Unit can provide a record to verify. WSP rep reminds us that Jeneva Cotton made a document showing the number of votes and election outcomes shared with the entire council.</p>	
<p>1030 -- 1100 DOC Secretary Time Cheryl Strange, DOC Secretary</p>	<p>-Families express concern that COVID has altered who participates in LFCs and SFC, in some ways for good, in some ways for bad. -Families express concerns that council participation does not reflect the diversity of the actual prison population. Not all families have found it easy to participate during COVID.</p> <p>-Families ask what support DOC and other families will give to a person of color who runs for a family co-chair position. Families also request more racial diversity in the high-ranking DOC employees who work with us at both the SFC and LFC levels.</p> <p>-Families want DOC to ensure that policy spells out that family participation in workgroups and council meetings translates to actual results, not just a cosmetic appearance.</p> <p>-Secretary Strange acknowledges the hardships COVID has brought for families and the incarcerated. It also identifies the silver lining: a virtual meeting platform has enhanced opportunities for inclusion. It may be possible to have hybrid meetings in the future. Families and DOC can discuss this, as well as meeting length, in January. Also, note that we have three returning/new DOC employees: David Flynn, Jeannie Darneille, and Chris Poulos, taking their new roles. Also discussed, Joanna Carns is leaving the OCO to take a new position, Sonja Hallum (Governor's crim justice policy advisor) is taking the interim role.</p> <p>-Announces expansion of in-person visitation to three visits per month per incarcerated individual. DOC will monitor COVID rates from there.</p> <p>-Getting a response is the stakeholder communication platform DOC will be used for sending out information directly to families and the public in listserv format. Will increase survey capacity and transparency.</p> <p>-CBCC, CCCC, OCC, MCC - have vacant reps and no actual LFC membership for some of these. Getting a</p>	

	response should help ensure a better connection with local facility families, especially at these facilities.	
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New business

Topic	Discussion/Key Points	Next Steps
<p>1100 -- 1145 Meet Mike Obenland/Correctional Operation Updates Q&A Mike Obenland, Assistant Secretary, Prisons Division</p> <p>Meet Jeannie Darneille, Assistant Secretary for Women's Prisons Division</p>	<p>-Obenland oversees the Men's Prisons Division chain of command.</p> <p>-Took this new position on September 1st.</p> <p>-Major area of focus is "reimagining our facilities" with the reduction in prisoner population</p> <p>- Has been with DOC three decades</p> <p>-Has worked at MCC, CCCC, CRCC, and SCCC.</p> <p>-COVID is still a focus, but hoping to see a decline after Governor's requirement concerning staff vaccines, working on getting booster shots for both the incarcerated and staff. They still will keep cohort approach in facilities for the time being.</p> <p>-DOC is "learning to live with COVID" instead of thinking of it as something that will end. Therefore, we will move forward with some semblance of normalcy but still actively monitor and use modified protocols as a precaution.</p> <p>-Sean Murphy: Reason to close units rather than entire prisons is to ensure certain programs are kept in place and to ensure that people are kept nearer reentry services in different geographical locations. Also, doing these kinds of "warm closures" keeps facility infrastructure intact in case the physical buildings are needed in the future. Better to repurpose than to close, according to Secretary Strange.</p> <p>-Jeannie Darneille: She has been in her DOC position for five days, will be going through DOC's CORE training for frontline staff. Has worked with DOC in many different roles over the past decades, but this is her first time working as a DOC employee.</p> <p>-Challenges of responding to recent legislation that is reducing the prison population. This will be one aspect of Jeannie's focus with DOC.</p> <p>-DOC is working with visiting employees right now to develop a revised visiting schedule that works with cohorts before posting January visiting schedule dates. Currently, special visit authorization for families traveling long distances is at the local facility superintendent's discretion. Challenge: may result in cross-cohort exposure, purported COVID and flu season concerns.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on "Get Response" listserv for next meeting.

	<p>After 60 days, DOC will reassess where COVID rates are and decide whether to expand in-person visitation further and allow in-person weddings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Families express concerns about the ongoing limitation to two visitors at a time. Families with more than one child are negatively affected by this. DOC's clinical team does not support expansion at this time, but Mike Obenland will circle back around with them to raise this concern for the next Safe Start assessment. -Fred Ivey (former WSP chaplain) is now statewide religious activities coordinator, will reach out to the API group to discuss formal recognition at all LFCs, and will develop a new statewide cultural policy. -Challenges with unit closures: DOC is unable to house medium-security prisoners in minimum security units. Wet cell units (toilets and sink) are better for COVID precautions than units with dry cells (no toilet), so it makes more sense to have medium wet cell units than some minimum units that only have dry cells. -DOC has also made significant changes to the classification model to allow camp eligibility at six years from release date instead of four, in part to let people have better access to a less restrictive environment as part of reentry prep, which has increased quantity of people they have at long-term minimum (MI3) levels. Expanding eligibility for the CRCC camp has helped with some challenges. Long-term minimum people currently housed in medium units are still considered a long-term minimum; DOC is doing its best to replicate the MI3 unit environment in these mixed custody units. -Families have concerns that minimum people housed in medium units at some facilities are not treated as actual minimum custody level. -Families would like to see the LFC family and DOC co-chairs required to attend SFC meetings. Information disconnect. -CI has been moving property of the incarcerated at MCC who are being transferred elsewhere with unit closures, no cost imposed. However, moves that happen as part of regular classification transfers sometimes entail the incarcerated person paying for the transfers. - Earlier this year, the Governor created The Office of Equity, so DOC and other state agencies are developing action plans in response. Part of that effort includes data collection related to equity concerns. This new office is led by Karen Johnson, who came from DOC. Adrian Thompson is DOC's Director of Equity, is leading efforts within DOC. Entails listening sessions, gathering info for this new office. The latest research and analytics 	
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	<p>director starts in December, will collect data on racial equity in program access, treatment access, etc. Importance of hiring a more diverse staff.</p> <p>-New requirement for all state employees to have 24 hours of diversity training; OFM is working on putting this into Governor's budget, 10–15 million dollars for this training. However, it will take a more significant push still to get this training down to the level of COs and CCOs.</p> <p>-Families request that family councils also receive such training and that agendas and minutes (Plus new <u>Get Response</u> platform communications) go out in languages other than English. Interpreters at meetings are also requested. Finally, families ask a working group on "language justice."</p>	
<p>1200 -- 1245 Meet Dave Flynn/Health Services Q&A Dave Flynn, Assistant Secretary, Health Services Division</p>	<p>- He is leading the effort to move to a "patient-centered" health model in DOC. We will be creating an electronic medical records system.</p> <p>-He met with DOC medical doctors last night. Discussed rolling out booster COVID vaccines, tentatively making vaccines available to kids who visit their parents.</p> <p>-One change: stabilizing positions and reallocating positions to improve access to medical care at the local facility level, in the process of hiring for those positions, getting everything into place. We will need more funding from the legislature and also need to fill a lot of jobs. We still need to reform a lot about the DOC Health Services culture. Secretary Strange acknowledges how problematic DOC's Health Services department has been. DOC spends 10% less on Health Services than in earlier years and pays less than other states. Only part of that is due to a reduction in the prison population. The broader American workforce shortage is affecting DOC medical as well, we needs more nurses. Tracking the medical needs of people through prison transfers has been challenging with paper records. DOC is currently emphasizing cancer care, asking for 92 million dollars in supplemental budget requests, and seeking defragment care. DOC needs resources from the legislature to be able to do more. We are working on quality improvement, adding positions for data visibility, nurses' assistants, etc. Actively recruiting, not just waiting for people to come to apply at DOC.</p> <p>-Family members who work on veterans' issues remind DOC that incarcerated veterans qualify for external care at VA hospitals; this could help reduce care expense burdens on DOC.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of COVID listserv for updated information. • Update on vaccinations • Update from Cheryl on meal concerns

	<p>-DOC was informed that details on form emails from the COVID listserv do not appear to be fully updated each time an email comes out.</p> <p>Families raise concerns about the nutritional quality of mainline meals and dietary health issues (diabetes, etc.).</p> <p>-Families cite concerns about how pandemic cold meals and CI boats have exacerbated these dietary issues during the pandemic. HQ has told families there are no nutritional substitutes during a pandemic. What families got was a list from DOC of protein-rich commissary items families could pay. Cheryl Strange promises to investigate this.</p>	
<p>1245 -- 1300 Introduction of Director of Person-Centered Services</p>	<p>-Chris Poulos, Director of Person-Centered Services for DOC now was introduced. He was director of Reentry Council for the other DOC, Dept. of Commerce. Is the formerly incarcerated and is also an attorney. He prefers to speak with people rather than claiming to speak for people. Go into the facilities and learn what people are experiencing to bring that info back to DOC leadership. His thought is that so long as jails and prisons exist, the people housed in them need to have their trauma addressed, and the underlying causes of incarceration need to be addressed. Feels that nutrition, concerns about solitary confinement are essential aspects of all of this. He is on day five of his new job.</p>	
<p>1245 -- 1300 Family-Centered Services Updates Dawn Taylor, Family Services Manager</p> <p>- Family-Friendly Events and Activities planning.</p> <p>-Collaboration between LFC and facility leadership to bring family voice to activities and other council efforts Lisa Flynn, DOC co-chair Loren Taylor, Family co-chair</p>	<p>-LFC issues will be moved to the January meeting when we look at the Family Council policy.</p> <p>-Dawn Taylor: Family Services Manager: Local facility CPPCs are trying to find ways to keep families connected during COVID. Fall events will instead be craft projects the incarcerated will send home to their loved ones. FSU has the grant to support expanding Parenting Inside Out to additional facilities. Child support clinics and dependency clinics are also resuming.</p> <p>-Families ask about visiting photos. Will be reassessing for next Safe Start release.</p> <p>- Families express that while crafts are great for children, they'd like to see table activities for adults, as well.</p> <p>-FSU is also working on getting programs going so the incarcerated can send out video greetings for their loved ones.</p> <p>-Formerly incarcerated men requests that DOC ensure Read to Me Daddy program has books for kids of all ages, not just books for very young children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reassess photos and number of visitors allowed in next Safe Start plan. • Expanding book selection for “Read to me Daddy and Mommy” program. • Table activities for adults • Consider IIBF presentation of “flow” for next SFC meeting in January.

	<p>Specifically, young adult chapter books are requested (directed at 10 years and older)</p> <p>-Cheryl Strange partners with Secretary Hunter of Dept. Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) have been discussing ways to get supervised visits for children of the incarcerated who are currently in foster care. Ability to connect via phone for incarcerated parents to speak with DCYF case workers is in the works. DOC and DCYF will have quarterly meetings together.</p> <p>-Families request more info for how IIBF info flows down from HQ to local facilities and vice versa, especially after the prison population is surveyed. The recent Recreation/Wellness survey of the population has now been shared with the family representatives on the IIBF Committee. The Family Friendly and Visit survey is launching to both families and incarcerated soon. DOC has approved adding an electronic survey function to CE Prisons, which will allow prisoners to do surveys from prison living unit kiosks. It is currently pending start in January to build with the assigned vendor.</p> <p>-Dependency 101 Clinics can be arranged through Bruce Wood for incarcerated parents who is working with facility CPPCs to schedule.</p>	
<p>1300 -- 1330 Local Family Councils 1. Developing IIBF reports based on council member feedback- sharing a new layout</p>	<p>-Families request more "interested parties" memos to be distributed to all stakeholders. Cheryl Strange says the Get Response platform is going to help with that. This platform will also ensure that all families, not just those who can come to SFC meetings, can get involved with special collaborative working groups like the IITS and IIBF.</p> <p>-Carrie Stanley's announcement: she would like to recruit a family member to be responsible for soliciting feedback from other families and then participating in a survey about equity and access to resources. Interested families should submit a letter to Loren Taylor by Wednesday.</p>	
<p>1330 -- 1445 Open Public Forum DOC & families</p>	<p>-Formerly incarcerated participant requests DOC creating parent advocate position to help incarcerated parents maintain a connection with children during incarceration</p> <p>-Families request a commitment to tracking and following up on all action items from both the action items list and chatbox that the start of each meeting entail DOC giving an update on the previous meeting's action items.</p> <p>-Families ask: Can voting meetings and COVID meetings be open to the public to end the situation of families not being happy with elite meetings that only reps get to participate?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action item follow up • Commissary updates from Sean. • IITS contract update for next meeting.

	<p>-Families ask DOC to eliminate signs with the word “offender.” Cheryl is taking pictures at local facilities anywhere she sees signs with the word and is sending to local facility superintendents and asking them to eliminate them. In addition, she says, putting it on Sean's to-do list to ask sups to eliminate the signs with the words.</p> <p>-Lisa Flynn is meeting with Charlotte Headley, head of the DOC security panel, who will answer us by January about whether non-Union-Supply wedding rings will continue to be allowed for those incarcerated people marrying after incarceration. Charlotte is working on the property policy.</p> <p>-Families ask for an update on transportation provision for visitors traveling long distances who cannot transport themselves since Western Van service was eliminated. Dawn Taylor is working on this and has identified options presented to DOC's budget office. An update will be provided to Anna and Felix, and once a service is identified, assuming approval should be posted on DOC's visiting website alongside info on the Lodging Assistance Program.</p> <p>-Diane Doonan: We will be publishing the list of questions and answers from the previous IIBF meeting sometime in December. Will include an IIBF question box to submit additional questions.</p> <p>-Families ask: What does the cost of incarceration cover? What does it not cover the transfer of prisoners' property? Doonan says it covers the cost of programming in the prisons, for one thing.</p> <p><i>Attachment 1</i></p> <p>-Families ask if DOC is going to retroactively reassess the disproportionate sentencing of BIPOC people in response to the June state Supreme Court decision? Cheryl Strange says DOC is discussing these efforts with all the relevant groups, including legislators, judicial branch, Sentencing Guidelines Commission, Criminal Sentencing Taskforce, etc. DOC must carry out sentences of the court but can be involved in these efforts to revisit sentencing and provide information to sentence review boards. DOC implements laws, but Governor, legislature, and courts are the ones who establish the rules to be implemented. Determine sentencing laws, sentencing grid, and three-strikes laws have made sentencing in this state very convoluted for new SGC members to understand. The legislature is also passing bills that affect sentencing, adding additional complexity. DOC itself cannot change the length of sentence for an incarcerated person. Senate Bill 6164 has given county prosecutors the ability to revisit cases</p>	
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	<p>that came out of their courts but not require prosecutors to do so. Families are concerned that prosecutors are too timid in challenging decisions made by those in their office many years ago. Suzanne Cook is our family rep to SGC, so email her with any additional questions: suzanne_cook13@icloud.com</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Families request that any voting that occurs be open and visible to families even if the way each person votes is secret. -Families are concerned that commissary prices have gone up, but the commissary spending limit has not increased. Sean Murphy forgot to follow up for us, will do so after this meeting. - Families request that virtual marriages be retained even once in-person marriages resume and that ring sizers be provided on living units so that the incarcerated can determine their wedding ring size. - DOC will let us know soon what is going on with the Incarcerated Individual Technology Services project concerning whether JPay will continue to be the table provider. Also, unless we hear otherwise, we can assume that free video visits will continue beyond the end of the year. Likewise, GTL's weekly free phone calls are ongoing indefinitely. - Formerly incarcerated participant requests that DOC reinstate the ability of the incarcerated to reach out to nonprofit organizations to ask for donations to events. - Cultural events: Lisa Flynn directs families to contact Fred Ivey fbivey@doc1.wa.gov concerning cultural groups -Lisa Flynn is researching costs of EFV and legislative requirements for individual contributions. 	
<p>1445 -- 1500 Solicitation of January Agenda Items/Closing Lisa Flynn, DOC co-chair Loren Taylor, Family co-chair</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Families requested follow-up at the beginning of the next meeting concerning action items from this meeting. -Mid-December, Lisa Flynn will solicit agenda items from families for the January meeting. -Lisa Flynn presented action items from the last meeting and what progress has been made. Attachment 2 -We added photos in visiting rooms and expanded the number of visitors per incarcerated individuals to the action item list. As well as looking into caps on commissary spending and order frequency. 	

Next meeting location: MS Teams (invite will be on upcoming agenda) Date: 01/22/2022 Time: 10 AM – 3 PM

Comments: _____

completion, the data classification category may change.

Distribution: **ORIGINAL** - Family council co-chairs