



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
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Meeting Minutes

Missing Persons Task Force

(Section 8, Chapter 489 of the Acts of 2014)

Wednesday, September 27, 2017

10:30AM – 12:00PM

EOPSS Conference Room, Room 2133
One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108

Members in Attendance:

Undersecretary Jennifer Queally, Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, Chair
Erica Cushna, Committee for Public Council Services (CPCS) Designee
Tara Maguire, Massachusetts District Attorneys Association (MDAA) Designee
Trooper Nicole Morrell, Massachusetts State Police (MSP) Designee
Sarah Kiley Schoff, Forensic Anthropologist
Chief Steven Wojnar, Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association (MCOPA) Designee

Members Not in Attendance:

Carol Cullen, Department of Children and Families (DCF) Designee

Others in Attendance:

Brian Domoretsky, Executive Office of Public Safety and Security
Thomas Keville, MA State Police

Task Force Business:

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:30AM. A quorum was present.

Approval of August Meeting Minutes

A member offered minor corrections on the draft minutes. A motion was made to approve the minutes pending the edits. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Recap of the Task Force Work to Date

The Chair led members in a review and discussion of the work of the Task Force since its inception. The group considered important past meetings and topics covered in relation to the Task Force's authorizing statute. Some members shared a desire to explore topics outside of the scope of the statute. Others expressed concern that the Task Force should stay within the bounds of the language and their mission. The group agreed to stay focused on meeting the requirements outlined in the authorizing language.

Discussion on Draft Report Outline

Members then turned their attention to an outline of a potential draft report of the group's work. The Chair informed members the outline was meant to serve as road map to guide completion of the Task Force's final report. It incorporated the mandates included in the group's authorizing statute, as well as topics uncovered in prior meetings to date. Members were asked to review the outline and report back on any sections they would like to pursue in greater detail.

In reviewing the legislation, policy and regulatory review section of the outline, members sought clarity on federal laws and regulations and wanted to ensure a future meeting could be held on those topics. The Chair agreed and added that a comparison to other states' laws and regulations would also be helpful.

For the data review section, members expressed concerns over the lack of recent data and the frustration with inconsistent data being reported up from local law enforcement agencies across the county. They felt the issues around data should be explored further and that the group should develop a recommendation urging action on data collection and reporting.

Discussion on Potential Task Force Recommendations

Members felt strongly that the group should not make recommendations relative to potential new legislative, policy, or regulatory changes, but should instead identify issues they have found with current state laws, policies, and regulations for review by the Legislature. The group agreed. Members also discussed inviting a designee from HHS who understands the current CRA law to future meetings as a guest and participant.

As discussed earlier, members felt strongly that the group should recommend improvements to data collection and compatibility among data centers and computer operating systems at the local level. There was unanimous support for developing this recommendation.

Lastly, members wanted to explore recommendations around training requirements for local law enforcement and human services agencies with respect to missing persons, and particularly juveniles. There was strong support among members for a recommendation on training.

Next Steps for the Task Force

To close the meeting, the Chair welcomed recommendations for future meeting topics. Members indicated they would like to learn more about the existing CRA law and potential improvements – particularly with respect to local law enforcement and better coordination between police and human services agencies. There was a desire to catalog all training across the state on missing persons and missing juveniles cases. Some members wanted to explore connections to the opioid epidemic, child trafficking and exploitation, and section 35 commitments.

The Chair thanked members for their feedback and recommendations. With time expiring, the Chair welcomed a motion to adjourn to meet at a future date to be determined.

Motion to Adjourn

A motion to adjourn until a date to be determined was made, seconded and approved unanimously.

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