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| Seal2  **CHARLES D. BAKER**  Governor  **KARYN E. POLITO**  Lt. Governor | The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  Executive Office of Public Safety and Security  One Ashburton Place, Room 2133  Boston, Massachusetts 02108  Tel: (617) 727-7775  TTY Tel: (617) 727-6618  Fax: (617) 727-4764  [www.mass.gov/eops](http://www.mass.gov/eops) | **THOMAS A. TURCO, III**  Secretary |

**Justice-Involved Women Panel Meeting**

**Date:** November 16, 2020

**Time:** 10:00AM-12:00PM

**Login:** WebEx

Meeting number: 178 135 1725

Password: EOPSS123

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 10:05AM.

**September Meeting Minutes Vote/Approval**

Michelle Wetherbee made a motion to approve the minutes and Rep. Chynah Tyler seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the minutes were passed unanimously.

**Speaker – Dr. Erika Kates**

Dr. Kates gave some background on her experience and work in residential shelters and correctional institutions for women. She spoke about women with substance use disorder and women being pregnant while incarcerated. Chairwoman Hallett stated pre-trial detainees have been moved out from Framingham with the exception of 22 detainees from Middlesex while 4 are federal. She explained the first step program is for those admissions who are detoxing at Framingham and that the women participate once they are medically cleared. Andrea James stated that alternative residential treatment programs are more successful than incarceration. Rep. Tyler asked about potentially having a subcommittee to be in charge of relaying information to the Panel having to do with proposed initiatives at the DOC/EOPSS and different events that the legislature and Governor/Lt. Governor may be involved in that would affect this work. Andrea James stated that she will continue to work to end incarceration and believes the current process with the RFR at Bay State is a completely non-transparent process and she will continue to raise awareness of that in her constituency. She believes there has not been any effort on the part of the Sheriff’s to send women home and that we need comprehensive changes in this state with respect to the incarceration of women.

**Speaker – EOPSS CFO Emi Joy – Framingham/Bay State Update**

Emi Joy spoke about Framingham being the second oldest institution in the United States. She spoke about a DCAMM assessment done on the Framingham campus that showed it to be in a state of disrepair. She acknowledged that several buildings on the campus would require re-structuring and re-building to support modern programming. The health services building is not able to provide the best services. 2017-2019, they found out that the power plant supporting Framingham would need to be replaced and would cost upwards of $50 million. She stated that the best use of taxpayer dollars might be to improve the physical space and better serve the women as opposed to simply replacing the very expensive power plant that would not make a considerable improvement in the lives of the women living at MCI-Framingham. She stated that the operational capacity of Bay State would allow for the women to have more space and the infrastructure would be state-of-the-art. Andrea James stated that we have too many women incarcerated and we should be looking at what alternatives we can move forward with. Emi stated that this began with an energy issue with respect to the power plant and have moved forward with a cutting edge lens to provide better circumstances for the women. Rep. Chynah stated that she would like to create a subcommittee to look at funding given to incarcerating women and re-allocate those funds to best serve the women but not necessarily decarcerate. Hema acknowledged that many women are survivors of sexual assault and we need to move in the direction of addressing their trauma.

**Norfolk County Sheriff Update**

Allison spoke about some renovations being done to the Norfolk Female Offender Reunification Center and acknowledged that she was unaware of these renovations and was given notice by Hema through e-mail after seeing a press release. Patty has also distributed an informative article from the Patriot Ledger which discussed the renovations.

**Policy Requests proposed by Patty Murphy**

Patty spoke about specifically addressing changing the culture of criminal justice and the need to agree as a committee to look at a change of language and terms to implement. She recommended looking into pre-trial diversion and working off of Erika’s research as well. She mentioned potentially having a new subcommittee to meet and brainstorm on approach and strategy and gather information from community members and probation as the government investor. Lastly, the group could approach legislative stakeholders on different options for change. There was some discussion about the subcommittee and another subcommittee that had been proposed.

**Public Comment**

A member of the public, Elijah, stated that prisons cause trauma and we need to move toward other treatment centers and residential alternatives to prison. Norma Wassel stated that she has looked at this issue and believes it is a large problem that women are being sentenced simply for using drugs with no other charges. She believes we should look backward at why women are going to prison before moving forward with a new prison. Ayana, Director of Programs at Families for Justice as Healing, spoke about her listening tour in Boston and her research led by post-incarcerated women that understand the needs of the community and hope to end the incarceration of women and girls. She spoke about incarceration harms their lives and the report shows that the criminal legal system is extremely problematic and we need more attention given to trauma that the women have experienced as well as mental health services. Allison stated that Ayana would be welcome to speak at a future meeting.