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

**JUSTICE-INVOLVED WOMEN PANEL**

Meeting Minutes

December 30, 2019

Time: 11:00AM-1:00PM

Place: Conference Room #1, McCormack Building, Boston, MA 02133

At 11:15AM, the meeting was called to order.

**Review/Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

Andrea J. proposed a change to the minutes re-stating that Senator Friedman had not disagreed with Mallory regarding using a trauma-lens for the Panel’s work but had rather agreed. Chair Hallett agreed to amend the minutes to reflect this. Patty M. made a motion to accept the minutes with this amendment and Andrea J. seconded the motion.

**Draft Report Review/Discussion**

Patty M. asked for clarity on a particular section of the report that referenced that the survey she developed would be provided to the Department of Correction. Arielle agreed to exchange the term “provide” for another verb to give better clarity.

Andrea J. mentioned that she was unsure of why what was previously discussed and voted on at prior meetings did not appear in the initial draft of the report sent to the Panel. Arielle acknowledged that it was an initial draft and that the current draft should reflect everything that the Panel wanted included. She also said she hopes that the current draft sufficiently covers those topics and addresses any concerns the Panel had about missing information they wished to be included.

Mallory H. asked that in the overview portion of the report, it be mentioned that the Panel has had quorum issues in the past and struggles to meet due to a lack of quorum and has re-committed to meeting monthly and having a quorum to hold these important meetings. She also asked that it be noted one meeting began an hour late while another ended an hour early due to a lack of quorum both times.

Mallory also mentioned that we need to acknowledge how rapidly the landscape for justice-involved and system-involved women has changed just since the panel has begun meeting. She also asked that we include how in addition to simply interviewing women at correctional facilities, we hear from previously incarcerated women that come to the Panel meetings to hear their stories and perspectives.

Corinn N. added that she was interested to see data points supporting the suggestion that there is a high population of pre-trial women in detention and would like to see those when we have them.

Maureen G. added that in the Executive Summary, it might be worth considering adding language explicitly stating that sexual and domestic abuse is a source of trauma for these women as opposed to just saying “abuse”. She also said adding exploitation and human trafficking is another issue. Patty M. agreed that should absolutely be added.

Rep. Tyler asked that the Panel add under Next Steps, for women who are currently incarcerated, we should be focusing on pathways to release and the reality is that some women will wind up in prison and we need to make sure the programming is on point and needs to be addressed.

Chair Hallett said the appropriate revisions will be made to the report and an updated report with be circulated to the Panel for review.

Andrea J. and Mallory H. both brought up a need for transparency and asked what the right mechanism is for keeping the Panel updated on things the legislature are doing around justice-involved women. Mallory H. asked if there is anything else that the Chairwoman can share today about women in DOC custody. Chair Hallett responded by saying that there was a plan to close MCI-Framingham and that Kyle Pelletier had reiterated that at the last meeting but that we are 2-3-4 years out from that move. She emphasized the need to have Bay State retrofitted for the needs of incarcerated women prior to the move. She said that Framingham is very old and has its issues and that Bay State is much newer with many updated facilities. However, she pointed out that Bay State is not sufficient for female offenders in its current state and needs major renovations. Andrea J. asked that the Panel refer to incarcerated women as such and avoid using the terms offender and inmate. She also stated that the Panel should not readily accept the Bay State move. She said the Panel should be raising some opposition to building another women’s prison in Massachusetts. She said that the $50,000,000 (fifty-million) dollars that has been proposed is outrageous and we should be looking at using those funds for de-carcerating women. Patty M. asked how many beds Bay State currently has. Andrea J. answered two-hundred. Mallory H. raised concerns about not having consultation with the Panel on the RFP for the design of the building. She also stated that it should include women that this is going to affect in the discussion as well. Patty asked Rep. Tyler how the Panel can learn more about meetings and hearings going on within the Legislature having to do with items that are of concern to the Panel. Rep. Tyler responded in saying that legislators can hold meetings without notice at any time and that we need to focus on a strategic plan with measurable goals and add that to the report. She stated that she is in support of pausing the process in order to have an opportunity to participate in the process with DCAMM. Andrea J. stated that the purpose of this Panel is to have more transparency in the process and that there should be adequate time for public comment on this issue. Mallory H. noted that the proposals for design are due back on January 8th, 2020. She said that the Panel should be briefed and have the opportunity to ask questions directly and should put the RFP to a hold until then. Chair Hallett stated that unfortunately the RFP is needed due to the fact that there are several updates that are needed for incarcerated women not currently at Framingham. She stated that the Panel should have a say in the process but should not pause the process. Rep. Tyler suggested creating what the Panel feels would be the physical model for Bay State and see what that might look like. There was some discussion about the cosmetology programming at Framingham and issues obtaining licenses. Chair Hallett clarified that it is not a programming issue, but rather at the discretion of the Board of Cosmetology whether or not to grant a license. Commissioner Spears asked if the design process is an inclusive process and distinguished that the very design is one set of decisions and that if the group is comfortable with that, the design process is another entire set of decisions. Patty M. noted that she has been a part of the DCAMM process once involving the Chicopee facility and that they did have participation in the process once the original funding was approved. Mallory said that they should be able to protest the RFP and see what other information they want to look at aside from just beds. Mallory said that they have not heard that Framingham is “unlivable” and there needs to be further discussion on whether a move is even necessary. Allison raised concerns about the power plant at Framingham. Patty suggested doing an unofficial population study to look at more realistic numbers other than beds. Andrea said we need to throw tangible data points out because there are other ways to spend the $50,000,000 (fifty-million dollars). She suggested doing a deep dive to be able to give a more intelligent presentation with regard to this. Patty also said that the Panel will need probation and diversion data points. Mallory noted that for getting information from Suffolk County, she was told there was a fee of $100 to get her request fulfilled and that going through the Panel is a much better channel. Rep. Tyler suggested adding frequency of reporting requirements to the Strategic Plan for the Panel to get the data they need on a regular basis. Mallory H. asked if the Panel can have a moratorium for the RFP and if they need to vote on that. Chair Hallett said she would relay the Panel’s concerns to Commissioner Mici with respect to the RFP and will try and get additional information for the Panel as well. She said that while she will relay the message, she does feel that the RFP process must continue due to current building concerns. Chair Hallett noted that over fifty women are serving life sentences and that we need a facility designed for them that is more updated than what they have currently. Andrea J. responded that there are better places for women serving life than prisons. Andrea made a motion to vote on pausing the RFP process. Sarah R. said she would be in favor of asking for additional information and seeing whether there is flexibility in the procurement process and if there are ways to include language saying that the selected vendor must work with advocates to have their input included. There was some discussion about whether to extend rather than pause the RFP process with DCAMM. Nancy C. stated that she is representing an agency and cannot vote based on her personal opinions and beliefs and must abstain from a vote. Patty asked whether it might be worth having a presentation from DCAMM on their process so the Panel can have a better understanding. Rep. Tyler agreed that she believes that is a good idea. Mallory H. suggested that someone reach out to Senator Spilka’s office. Rep. Tyler said the Panel should give Senator Friedman the room to do that. The Panel discussed a protest and informal meeting with Senator Spilka occurring on January 2nd and January 6th, respectively. Maureen G. raised concerns over not knowing what the power of the Panel truly is and trying to figure out how to best move forward. Andrea J. said that this is all healthy tension and they are moving toward finding some middle ground. Patty raised concerns about voting based on personal beliefs since a lot of the members of the Panel are representatives from greater agencies. Sarah R. agreed and said she could support a strategic plan but cannot speak on the procurement plan, etc. Chair Hallett said that there does not need to be a formal vote on whether or not to pause the RFP process and reiterated that she will speak with Commissioner Mici and get more information after relaying the Panel’s concerns. She offered members of the Panel the option to craft the language for her to provide to the Commissioner in order to accurately represent their concerns. It was decided that Patty M. and Andrea J. will craft bulleted points for the Commissioner and get them over to Allison. They also asked that the Chair put the link to the RFP on the drive for the group.

**Scheduling Future Meetings**

There was some discussion by the Panel on when to hold future meetings and it was agreed that the best option for everyone was the last Monday of every month from 11am-1pm.

**Letter to Sheriffs Regarding MCI-Framingham to County Transfer**

The Panel reviewed the letter that was drafted by Mallory H. and Andrea J. Patty asked for clarification on the part of the letter regarding the size of the population transferred out of Framingham. They agreed to tweak the language to clarify that. Patty M. stated that we need to send the data requests out to District Attorneys and police departments. Rep. Tyler said that can be added to their strategic plan. Maureen G. suggested the letter include a request to get a response before the next meeting in January. It was agreed that this would be added and that Chair Hallett would sign off on behalf of the Panel. Rep. Tyler said we should ask for what programming is currently being provided at Suffolk for the women that were transferred.

**Public Comment**

Marie Turley from Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department stated that the Panel should consider getting their statistical data collection legislatively and that they should look at how to best collect data on system-involved women.

A formerly incarcerated women, Jasmin Rivera, spoke about her experience at MCI-Framingham and that women who are incarcerated are not criminals but are drug addicts and that DOC needs to turn its focus to rehabilitation. She talked about staff at MCI-Framingham being degrading toward her and issues with the food at the institution among other grievances relating to her treatment while incarcerated at Framingham.

At 1:33pm, a motion was made by Rep. Tyler to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Patty M. The motion carried unanimously.