

Georgia Public Defender Council

MINUTES

04/25/2019

10:30 AM

MEETING CALLED BY	Interim Chair Donna Seagraves
TYPE OF MEETING	Regular Council Meeting
FACILITATOR	Jimmonique R.S. Rodgers, Interim Executive Director
NOTE TAKER	Cheryl Karounos
ATTENDEES	Council members present: D. Sims, Murphy Miller, J. Vines, E. Tolley, L. Paris, D. Seagraves (Chairperson Pro Tem). Others present & seated at the table: J. R. S. Rodgers, B. Bullard, C. Karounos. J. Stokes, T. Raiford. G. Word by phone and others in attendance.

The meeting was called to order by Interim Chair Donna Seagraves at 10:32 AM

APPROVAL OF AGENDA	D. Seagraves	Agenda unanimously approved.
APPROVAL OF MINUTES	D. Seagraves	Minutes from prior meeting unanimously approved.
DIRECTOR UPDATE	J.R.S. Rodgers	<p>CPD Appointments since last meeting: Caryn Lobdell in Toombs, Joshua Larkey in Waycross, David Winheim in Southwestern. Interviews in process to replace Gary Bowman in Flint upon his retirement. Technical Assistance grant to study the benefit of social workers in our offices. Partnering with Dekalb, Fulton, Lookout Mountain, Piedmont working group. Needs assessment will result to identify need, data collection, identify partners and opportunities. TTA ends in September. Mandatory reporter status of social workers is potential issue. Hope is to possible get a statutory change to address this in PD offices. OJJDP Grant due in May. Applying for grant for Juvenile Division in push to build it throughout the state. Capital Defender has 49 open cases currently, has closed 249 in 13 years, averaging 19 cases closed/year. Early intervention focusing on mitigation has contributed to LWOP sentences over death sentences. G. Word's team got death penalty off the table in Gwinnett Martinez case. ELM is coming up this weekend. Training will be offered for division heads, chief assistants, emerging leaders who were nominated by their managers. Forensic support division in answer to requests from the field. Colin Belair to lead with pro bono private partners. True allele is a hot button issue for 2020.</p>

BUDGET	J.R.S. Rodgers	Budget for FY 2020 reflects salary schedule proposed by PAC. Will vote later on its adoption. New APDs start at \$50k (\$6k over last year's starting salary) caps in mid \$90s because of statute outlining that APD salaries cannot be no more than a certain percentage of CPD salaries. Protocol to support the salary increases being developed with the help of Governor's office, DOAS, committee of CPDs and Division heads to study.
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS	C. Karounos	HB702 was read for a second time on Sine Die. The bill is sponsored by Brett Harrell and calls for the repeal of the death penalty in Georgia. It has bipartisan support. We will be watching this bill with interest next session. J. Rodgers clarified that our legislative focus is largely to play defense, to ensure GPDC is considered and included in the legislative process alongside PAC.
VOTING ITEM		D. Seagraves and J. Rodgers gave an overview of the proposed salary schedule explaining that they will work with T. Raiford to align our levels and the salary "classes" as proposed. E. Tolley moved to adopt the schedule effective July 1, 2019. J. Vines seconded. Unanimously approved.
EXECUTIVE SESSION		Motion to adjourn to Executive Session at 11:15.

Meeting briefly reconvened and then adjourned at 11:43 AM