

**MINUTES OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM IN
RURAL NEVADA AND TRANSITIONAL HOUSING
FOR RELEASED OFFENDERS (S.C.R. 32)**

MAY 10, 2004

The fourth meeting of the Criminal Justice System in Rural Nevada and Transitional Housing for Released Offenders (S.C.R. 32) was held at 9:00 a.m., on May 10, 2004, at the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Room 2134, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was video-conferenced to the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Room 4401, Las Vegas, Nevada.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN CARSON CITY:

Senator Mike McGinness, Chairman
Assemblyman John Marvel, Vice Chairman
Senator Dean Rhoads
Senator Maurice Washington
Assemblyman Bernie Anderson

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Assemblyman Rod Sherer

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT:

Mark Krmpotic, Senior Program Analyst, LCB Fiscal Analysis Division
Michelle Van Geel, Senior Research Analyst, LCB Research Division
Kelly Lee, Deputy Legislative Counsel, LCB Legal Division
Donna Thomas, Secretary

EXHIBITS:

Exhibit A - Meeting Notice and Agenda Packet.
Exhibit B - Attendance Record.
Exhibit C - Administrative Assessments.
Exhibit D - White Pine County Criminal Justice Facility Conceptual Design
Construction Cost Estimate.
Exhibit E - Nevada Department of Corrections – Transitional Housing Plan.

Because of their size, the exhibits are not attached to these minutes, however upon request, may be reviewed in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, Nevada, phone number, (775) 684-6825.

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I. ROLL CALL.

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Chairman McGinness called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. The secretary then called the roll; a quorum was present.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 10, 2004 ADVISORY MEETING.**COMMITTEE**

Directing the Committee to Agenda Item II, Approval of the Advisory Committee Minutes, Chairman McGinness indicated he was waiting for the signed copy of the minutes and would call a motion for approval of the minutes later in the meeting.

IV. OVERVIEW OF MANDATES IMPACTING THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM IN RURAL NEVADA.**SYSTEM IN RURAL**

Judge Papez, Seventh Judicial District, thanked the Committee for conducting the March meeting in Ely and hoped it was informative. Chairman McGinness said that the hospitality was great and the tour was very enlightening for the Committee.

Judge Papez advised the Committee that the unfunded mandates affected the rural courts and legislation passed was hard to implement in the rural areas. He said it was "one size-fits-all" legislation that mainly fit the urban areas and implementation was very difficult in rural Nevada. He said there was a major reform of the Juvenile Court Act, Chapter 62, regarding counseling for juveniles convicted of drug and alcohol violations. He commented that juvenile counseling was a very important issue and the state needed to intercede in the youthful offenders lives before the problem continued and they ended up in an adult criminal court. He said that Chapter 62 provided that juveniles were required to have an evaluation if they were convicted of a drug or alcohol offense. He noted that there were many routine cases in juvenile courts that involved juveniles that were apprehended at a party. Because they had consumed a small amount of alcohol, and even though it was their first offense and first appearance in court, the law still required an evaluation causing a financial burden to the family. Because it was exceedingly difficult to send a juvenile convicted of a minor violation to Elko, Las Vegas or Reno, counselors came from the larger cities to provide evaluations. Judge Papez said that in most cases the juvenile needed corrective action by the court. A bad decision made by the juvenile, on a minor offense did not necessitate an alcohol evaluation. He said most of the rural counties were unable to order an evaluation and therefore were not following the law. He stressed the evaluations were important and intercession was necessary if the juvenile had a continued problem with alcohol or drugs.

Continuing, Judge Papez said that Lincoln County presented a whole set of problems and drug use was as prominent in the rural as in the urban areas. Methamphetamine use surpassed marijuana use, even with the youth. He said rehabilitation, evaluations and counseling were critical and the offenders were sent to other counties for treatment if their parents could afford to transport them. He mentioned that counselors from Mesquite used to travel to Ely to provide services, but due to financial restraints they were unable to continue. Ely had applied for grants and used grant money to help facilitate the counseling. Many families of the juveniles were indigent, lacked transportation and resources and could not afford to take time off work to travel to mandated counseling.

Judge Papez indicated that the mandatory counseling required for juveniles charged with an act of delinquency was another revision of Chapter 62. He said the reason for the revision was sound, but the implementation was extremely difficult in rural Nevada since there was no budget in the counties for the services. He said that judges routinely appointed the State Public Defender to families that were indigent and could not afford counseling. He indicated that there were usually multiple defendants and the Public Defender could only represent one at a time. Due to the limited number of attorneys in Nevada, the rural counties were required to travel to the urban areas for counseling and the county had to pay the attorney's fees

Continuing, Judge Papez said that child protection cases, Chapter 432B, were also extremely expensive and often involved abused or neglected children. In many cases, the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) had removed the child from the home and a set of procedural laws had to be followed. Often one or both parents were at fault for abuse or neglect and were at odds with each other and counsel had to be appointed for the parents. Also, the law required that a guardian and attorney be appointed for the child to represent their

best interests. Judge Papez reiterated that there was a lack of attorneys for the needs of the rural counties and mandates could not be implemented.

Vice Chairman Marvel asked if rural judges were coming up with alternatives to correct the statutes for the rural communities. Responding, Judge Papez said when Chapter 62 was revised last session, rural judges monitored the legislation as it was happening. He declared that the requirement of counsel in all cases involving an act of delinquency concerned the rural counties. There was an ongoing effort to ask the legislature not to pass requirements that were budget-busting for the rural counties and the rural judges had tried to give input when the legislation was written.

Assemblyman Anderson clarified that the Chapter 62 movement was mainly a consolidation of the juvenile component into a single chapter and it did not deal with any substantial changes in the statutes. He indicated that he was concerned with the juveniles in terms of having their own separate attorney present to look out for their best interests and it came from the problems with DCFS that were identified in the state and the way they implemented their program. He asked how the best interest of the child would be provided if they were not provided an attorney.

Judge Papez said that he was not questioning the rational for the law but the implementation of the law. Assemblyman Anderson said there were problems with population caps and the rural areas of the state felt they were not getting the necessary services like drug courts. He said that in the early stages of developing the drug court, there was a lack of ability for the rural counties to respond and a lack of programs. It was burdensome to the state correction system to carry out the drug court programs. He asked how the state could have a uniform system of the law when there were three dramatically different population centers to work with. Judge Papez agreed with Assemblyman Anderson and said there could not be separate categories for different parts of the state. He stated that kids were kids, regardless of whether they lived in Elko, Battle Mountain or Las Vegas and they had the same problems and deserved the same services and access to justice. He reiterated that the rational for the law was sound but the mandates lacked funding.

Vice Chairman Marvel said there was a good juvenile program in the Sixth Judicial District and asked if there were other juvenile facilities with similar programs. Responding, Judge Papez said the programs in the rural counties and in the Sixth Judicial District helped other counties and allowed juveniles from other districts to use the program. The counties gave price breaks to other counties and looked to every possible area of the state to satisfy their needs. He said the urban areas had been responsive and assisted the rural counties when possible.

Senator Rhoads asked if statewide fees and assessments from AB 29 helped raise any revenue for the rural counties. Responding, Judge Papez said the drug courts were being established in rural Nevada. The Fourth and Sixth Judicial District received their first disbursement from the assessments and were using them to set the foundation for the drug courts. The counties were optimistic that the assessments would continue and they hoped to have a drug court in Ely in early 2005 and in Elko in September 2004. He said the county had applied for a grant from the Department of Justice to assist in the state funding of the courts.

Judge Ron Nimen, Justice of the Peace, Ely Township No.1, expressed his concerns with the unfunded mandates for needed counseling and domestic violence issues. Legislative mandates indicated that one and a half hours of counseling per week had to be provided for people that had violated the domestic violence law. Due to the lack of counselors, it was impossible to provide and therefore not imposed in the rural areas. He said the courts could not expect people to travel 190 miles for mandated counseling. DUI evaluations were provided from counselors in Elko and the courts had to wait until the counselors were available for evaluations; delaying the courts and the people. He said the unfunded mandates imposed on the courts were setting up people for failure. Mental health services were available in Ely during the 1980s until they were cut and short-budgeted.

Vice Chairman Marvel asked how much counselors charged per hour of service and what percent of cases

were adjudicated as indigent. Responding, Judge Nimen said he did not know what the counselors charged since there were no counselors in Ely. Judge Papez interjected that there was range of charges and many times a sliding scale was used and the financial resources of the family were taken into consideration. He expressed that he had never seen any unfair charges and noted that the counselors still had to run a business and make a living. Judge Papez said a large percentage of defendants in the district courts were indigent and represented by the Public Defenders office. Judge Nimen added that 90 percent of the defendants that came through the justice and municipal courts were indigent.

Assemblyman Anderson asked if there was local money for the mental health programs in Ely. He asked if the court system in the county tried to make an appeal to local government for money to keep the programs in place. Responding, Judge Nimen said he did not know if there was local money to help supplement the state money. He said fees charged were based on a sliding scale reflecting the income of the people needing services. Judge Papez interjected that the rural clinics program was fairly strong in the 1980s and at that time there were four to five counselors in Ely. As the law increased the requirements, the rural clinics program was depleted and lost funding and currently there was one professional practicing in the rural mental health clinics. There was a six-month waiting period for services and the effectiveness of counseling was lost while waiting for services.

Chairman McGinness stated that even when the clinics were present in rural Nevada the counties were having trouble trying to fill the positions.

III. OVERVIEW OF COURT FUNDING INCREASES APPROVED BY THE 2003 LEGISLATURE.

Karen Baggett, Deputy Director, Administrative Office of the Courts, referred to tab III in the meeting packet and noted the memo outlined the administrative assessments, specialty court assessments (AB 29) and the multi-party filing surcharge (SB 106). She said that Judy Holt from the Administrative Office of the Courts would present the assessments.

Judy Holt, Manager of Budgets of the Administrative Office of the Courts, referred to the handout, Exhibit C - Administrative Assessments, and gave a brief summary of the projected assessments for FY 2004:

- Total assessments for FY 2004 were \$23,532,000.
- Judicial branch retained \$8,623,000.
- Executive branch retained \$8,098,000.
- Local courts retained \$4,302,000.

Assemblyman Anderson asked for clarification of the total budget for the Criminal History Repository in the Executive Branch program. In response, Ms. Holt said the total budget was \$11,100,000 and the administrative assessments were \$4,761,000.

Vice Chairman Marvel asked if \$15 was charged for background checks and was it reflected in the Criminal History Repository budget. Ms. Holt believed it was included in the budget. Ron Titus, Director, Administrative Office of the Courts interjected that \$21 was charged for background checks and it was only for civil applicants.

Directing the Committee to tab III of the meeting packet, Ms. Holt noted that AB 29 increased the assessments by \$10. There were a half-million assessments per year at a \$10 increase and it was assumed it would bring \$5 million additional revenue, split between the Judicial and Executive Branch. Ms. Holt referred to page 36 of the meeting packet and noted that the chart outlined what was budgeted and where the state was relative to the budget projections. It also showed the budget accounts supported by the administrative assessments for fiscal year 2004.

Assemblyman Anderson asked if the Judicial Education Division within the Supreme Court was 100 percent

funded through administrative assessments and did it include travel and per diem if training related. Also, he asked if it included local training for judges that held conferences in their own counties. He asked if the judges were eligible to request funding to aid them in local conferences. Ms. Holt said travel was supported if funds were available and related to the training.

Ms. Holt indicated that 60 percent of the administrative assessments went to the Supreme Court budget. She said the Supreme Court had a \$10 million dollar budget and was supported in half from the court assessments and it supported the Clerk's Office, the Chambers and central staff and their expenses.

Continuing, Ms. Holt pointed out that the last budget that was supported 100 percent by court assessments was the Retired Justice Duty fund. The program was for retired senior judges that were called from of a pool of judges and willing to fill in for sitting judges unable to sit at the bench.

Assemblyman Anderson asked if the need for the additional retired judges for the urban and rural areas had grown over the last few years because of the complexity and court load. He asked if separate funding could be established for the retired judges, so it would free-up dollars from administrative assessments. Responding, Mr. Titus noted there was a small committee made up of judges from different districts that were looking at the senior judge program. He said the demand for senior judges had become greater and several courts were fearful that senior judges would leave the bench. He indicated that there was a provision in AB 29 that allowed senior judges to serve in drug courts. The Committee was implementing a solid senior judge program that was cost effective and enticing to judges. Assemblyman Anderson asked if there was an advantage to having the retired judges. Mr. Titus indicated that the rural communities were very small and many judges knew the offenders and had to recuse themselves from the case. Then a sitting judge would have to be found to replace them. He said senior judges were an appropriate replacement and their pay was based on the salary of a sitting judge. Because it was declared a critical need position, the senior judges were eligible to earn additional retirement. Due to the competition with the private sector, the state needed to offer incentives that would encourage judges that were vital to the community.

Assemblyman Anderson asked if the percentages on page 36 of the meeting packet were decided by legislative act or by an internal policy of the courts. Ms. Holt said the percentages were already established by statute and even if the need for money became greater, the court would have to find it in another area.

Continuing, Ms. Holt referred to page 37 of the meeting packet and said the new seven dollar specialty court assessment was approved by AB 29. She said the chart was updated by court through March 31, 2004 for assessments that had been received through the months of February. The assessments were collected in one month and actually paid the following month. She said the amount of \$1,034,103 was updated to \$1.2 million through March 31, 2004. Ms. Holt said they would not receive the \$2.5 million that was projected because it was a new assessment and was only applicable to misdemeanor convictions for infractions that had occurred on or after July 1, 2003.

Assemblyman Anderson asked if the numbers projected were lower because the misdemeanors were not as high as originally projected. He asked which jurisdictions had the fewest amount of misdemeanors. Ms. Holt said that was part of the reason and it was projected that the assessments would stay flat. She indicated that since it was a new assessment there was a certain amount of automation involved getting the projections and some courts were better supported and able to get it running sooner.

Chairman McGinness asked if the revenues would meet the expectations in the next fiscal year since there was a backlog of tickets. Ms. Holt said the amount will go up in FY 2005 and they predicted slightly under \$3 million for FY 2005.

Continuing, Ms. Holt said the worksheet on page 38 of the meeting packet was a summary of funds received pursuant to SB 106 and it showed where the funding from the new assessments had been distributed to support ongoing and new programs.

Chairman McGinness noted that the rural counties helped one another and Judge Robert Lane, Fifth Judicial District had put together a program in Pahrump without any funding that worked well. Assemblyman Anderson perceived that the purpose of AB 29 was to try to bring into existence the rural drug court program that had been lacking.

Judge Harold Albright, Reno Township Justice Court, Department No. 4, said that he had a similar drug court program in his court called The Counseling Compliance Program. He said local counselors in Reno provided weekly reports regarding defendants in the program and they provided extensive counseling to help defendants through the counseling requirements that were imposed by court sentencing. Judge Albright said there was a core group of fifteen people that met every week to discuss the individuals in the programs and he asked the counselors if they were willing to help in the rural counties. He indicated that eight of the counselors had a juvenile specialty and were willing to set up a circuit for counselors to travel to the rural counties. He said the idea was fairly new and a suggestion was made to purchase a motor home to travel and set-up a temporary office in the rural counties and provide counseling for people. He said they were coordinating the counseling needs of the counties and were trying to find a central location for the providers to meet with the offenders. He said a corporation was set up for juvenile counseling and they were trying to coordinate the counseling base to provide evaluations for juveniles and adults.

Bill Vickers, CEO and President, Kids Behavioral Health, said the program, For Kids Foundation, 501(C)3, would be used to fund the program and Kids Behavioral Health helped establish and provide the money to keep the foundation operational. After talking with Judge McGee and Judge Albright, Mr. Vickers noted that funds were needed to help provide the services to the rural areas. He said services should include more than just substance abuse counseling or drug counseling and should include mental health services. He said that Judge McGee was a board member for the foundation and the goal was to help provide money for transportation for offenders to mandated services and to help their families. The company would be willing to provide a mental health expert or counselor to work with the mental health component and they were willing to sponsor a counselor to provide some of the services.

Assemblyman Anderson said that the number of people with dependency and mental health problems was over 70 percent. He asked if the program also treated individuals with mental health issues and if the referrals from Judge Albright's court were predominately juveniles. Responding, Mr. Vickers said the children referred to the center received some substance abuse treatment and many had a dual diagnosis. There were treatment centers in Utah, Montana, California and Hawaii but none in Nevada. Mr. Vickers said that Judge Albright had never referred a child or client to the program. He said their goal was to provide money for services for children and the foundation was formed approximately a year and a half ago because of the children that were lost in the system. He noted that some children had sexual problems, were low functioning and involved in some type of criminal activity. They needed to be removed from the community and would benefit from a treatment program.

Vice Chairman Marvel asked how the program was primarily funded. Mr. Vickers said funding was through Medicaid, private insurance, some self-pay and First Health was the third-party administrator. Since the company was a for-profit company, none of the funding was from federal grants.

Judge Albright said they envisioned a coordinated referral of the juvenile population from the rural areas to a central location. They would also coordinate the referral of adults, who were required to receive counseling, to the same central location on a particular day. A counselor would go to the rural county and conduct an assessment and evaluation of the juveniles in the morning and then the required counseling of the adults in the afternoon. He said they were hoping to split the costs between the 501(C)3 Corporation, specialty court money through the AOC and some self-pay from the clients.

Chairman McGinness commended Judge Albright for having the vision to start the program and he encouraged him to keep going. He said many of the other judges were looking at the program with great anticipation.

Assemblyman Anderson asked Judge Albright what percent of the operating programs were being utilized by adult versus juveniles. He questioned if there was a differentiation between the mental health, DUI and other drug providers that were offered to the individuals in the program. Responding, Judge Albright said his program was 100 percent adults. He said the DUI providers were through Judge Green's court and mental health cases were referred to his court.

In response to the question from Assemblyman Anderson, Judge Albright said the programs were 100 percent self-funded and a \$50,000 Byrne grant was obtained. He said that \$30,000 of the grant money was set aside and had not been used in two years. He confirmed that part of the reason they were not getting the amount of money anticipated was a lot of people lacked resources to pay their fines and converted their fines into community service. Due to the requests to convert fines into community service, the county was losing the seven dollar fee. Judge Albright said some people could not pay their counselors; after they were analyzed and put through a job placement program and assessed to be truly indigent, some of the money from fines was used to pay the fees. However, some people were told that in order to get out of the program, they had to pay the counselor themselves.

Assemblyman Anderson commented that during the original testimony on the bill, the Committee had to deal with the disproportionate burden on the people in the lower economic stratum to pay the administrative assessments and they were the people that were in need of the programs. The AOC was often looking to administrative assessments that funded other programs such as computers, travel and other necessities of the court.

Judge Albright said that the fact that the indigents could not pay fines convinced him that supplemental money was needed. He said the Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse (BADA) certified counselors had a sliding scale and some of the fees went down to seven dollars a session and if the individual was unable to pay, they would have to explain their situation to the judge. He indicated the most the counselor charged for a session was \$35. If the counselor was a sole provider and not connected to a big company and needed to get paid grant money was available to pay their fees. He said many companies would hire people from the treatment programs and they received drug tests and counseling from their employment that the court would otherwise provide. Judge Albright said 100 percent of the people referred to jobs from the courts were hired. Judge Albright said the assessment process determined who was able to pay or not and money should be provided for the people that needed it.

Assemblyman Anderson asked if drug testing was a condition of employment when a person was referred to a job by the courts. Judge Albright said that drug testing was part of their job placement and a condition of his court. He said that the rural counties needed to be informed that the people from the drug courts made good employees and were drug tested, had evaluations and were receiving counseling.

VI. OVERVIEW OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS, BOYD SCHOOL OF LAW EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM.

Chairman McGinness moved to the next agenda item and noted that Dick Morgan, Dean of the Boyd School of Law was present in Las Vegas. He thanked him for his patience. Chairman McGinness also recognized Assemblyman David Parks who was present in Las Vegas.

Mr. Morgan informed the Committee that the externship program was a very important educational program at the school. It provided opportunities for the second and third year students to obtain real legal experience in the field and in public law offices. The program provided a community service and contributed to the public office in which they were working. He said it was primarily an educational experience and students received a good deal of mentoring, training, critiquing and learning from their field supervisor. He emphasized that it was an important part of the curriculum and had a major academic purpose. The field supervisor provided time and energy and helped students to develop the skills to provide good legal work.

Martin Geer, Professor and Externship Director, William S. Boyd School of Law, University of Nevada, Las Vegas explained that historically the externship programs in many law schools in the county were unstructured and not regulated. This was an issue with the American Bar Association (ABA) and therefore they enforced strict guidelines. Since it was an academic program and the students earned credit and there were writing components and weekly class meetings, the school had to be consistent with the rules. In 2003 there were approximately 100 students participating in the program and they provided over 25,000 hours of field work in government and public interest placement. Students were not placed in the private sector and since the school was located in Clark County, the bulk of the students worked in Las Vegas. He said the program was offered three semesters a year and was just beginning to address rural placements. He said for the first time last summer, students were placed with judges in Douglas County and Winnemucca. It was a successful experience and there were other students from the rural areas that were primarily interested in externing in legal communities where they could see themselves practicing. Mr. Geer said when students understood the good opportunities available such as entry-level jobs in prosecutor's office, legal aid and judicial clerks in the rural areas there would be more interest. He said there was interest in Washoe County since the Washoe County Bar Association agreed to provide tuition reimbursement for students that worked with the family court self-help center. He said there was a need to get students to return to the rural counties where they came from and to look at other rural communities for entry-level positions in government work.

Mr. Morgan interjected that he would be happy to answer any questions the Committee had regarding the externship program. He acknowledged that the Boyd School of Law existed and was flourishing because of the legislature and the state. He thanked them and said they were the primary source of support for the school.

Assembly Anderson praised the school, administration and programs that were recognized by the ABA in its first attempt to become a recognized school. He asked if there would be more students interested in the rural areas if an incentive was offered through the school. Mr. Morgan said that incentives would entice students to the rural areas. He said the main focus of administration had been establishing the school and they needed to help students find externships in the rural communities. He indicated that the bulk of the students would always want to work in the urban areas and there was only a minority of students interested in the rural communities. Mr. Morgan said he would like more students to experience externships in the rural communities for a summer or a semester and hopefully some of the students would end up staying there as graduates and lawyers in the community.

Mr. Geer added that, aside from the idea of tuition reimbursement to attract students, possibly some judges from the rural areas could come to the school to make students aware of the legal community, culture and job opportunities in the rural counties. The school needed to impress upon students that as much as they would like to start off their career in the Clark County District Attorney's Office, that was not always possible and they needed to be open to other types of opportunities.

Assemblyman Anderson said the internships in the rural counties would create a wider field of opportunity for students since the District Attorney's Office in the rural areas was smaller staffed and there was a broader level of programs available to them. If they were in a larger county, they might have a glorified secretary position as compared to that of a legal work in a rural area where they are understaffed already. Responding, Mr. Geer said that students had more opportunities in the rural areas and presently there were attorney's in Clark County that had served as law clerks for five or six years. Rural counties offered a better opportunity for students that wanted to work in a structured environment and seek out positions in the community. He stressed that the best way to get their foot in the door was to extern in a rural county.

Dean Morgan endorsed the idea of creating incentives, whether tuition rebates or financial aid to students who take advantage of rural externship opportunities.

Dorothy Nash Holmes, Administrator of Correctional Programs, Department of Corrections (DOC) wanted to augment the record regarding University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Boyd School of Law and said the DOC was in

a partnership with the Clinic's Program in Las Vegas and the school sent higher-level students to High Desert State Prison to train the law clerks on the procedures, process and deadlines for filing paperwork for lawsuits so there was no waste of the judicial resources. She said frivolous litigation that had no basis costs the state countless money and the program through the law school offered a service to the community. Also, family law issues were a big problem with women at Jean Camp and a program with the law school was set up for students to come to the camp every three months to help inmates dealing with family law issues. She indicated that there was not enough money in the DOC budget to provide legal services for all inmates dealing with family law issues and the school was providing a tremendous public service to help inmates file correctly themselves. Ms. Crawford wanted to thank the Boyd School of Law and wanted to put it in the record that they were also helping the community in other areas.

VII. DISCUSSION ON INCREASED LEGAL ASSISTANCE IN RURAL NEVADA, LOAN FORGIVENESS PROGRAM.

Addressing the Loan Forgiveness Program, Dean Morgan said this was addressed in the earlier presentation and students needed to be exposed to life and experience professional careers in rural Nevada. He reiterated that offering loan forgiveness or tuition rebates as incentives for students was a great idea. The Boyd School of Law had been talking with a number of justice groups since the early days of the school regarding a tuition rebate or loan forgiveness program to facilitate public service careers. He said the cost of legal education and the cost of higher education in general had gone up in recent years. He noted that The Boyd School of Law was reasonably priced and tuition was approximately \$8,000 for residents and \$15,000 per year for non-residents. He said most law schools tuition around the world was higher than Nevada. Dean Morgan said that students graduating from law schools who financed their education had very large debt; the average debt was \$80,000. He said student's debt after graduation was a factor in their career choices. When faced with a large debt, they were less likely to take a \$30,000 a year job in rural Nevada. Students were looking for higher paying jobs to amortize the debt they had accumulated. Dean Morgan hoped that the school would implement a program so students who chose a career in a low-paying public interest or public sector job could obtain a rebate of their tuition or subsidization of their loan repayment schedule. He believed this type of program and incentives for students would encourage them to practice in the rural counties and hopefully a number of students would stay after they learn the benefits of life in the rural areas. He pointed out that the obvious problem with the loan forgiveness program was the unavailability of funding to implement the program.

Christine Smith, Associate Dean, Boyd School of Law, commented that the school had been working with various groups in the community to develop a loan repayment assistance program. Ms. Smith said she put together a group of law school staff, students, university financial aid administrators and worked with members of the Access to Justice Committee to develop a loan repayment assistance program that was very workable for the students. The program would give them the loan forgiveness that they needed in order to pursue jobs in the public service area and provide legal aid to low-income Nevadans. She reiterated that funding was needed to operate such a program. The program would provide a maximum of \$6,000 a year to graduates working in public service jobs. If the graduates continued in the public service jobs, the school would continue funding if they submitted a yearly application. She said the program was designed and was workable and funding was now needed to support the program and provide the much needed financial assistance to the graduates.

Dean Morgan interjected that the program design was not based on geography, rural versus urban, it simply focused on the level of income that the student would be making and where the student was working. He emphasized that the school would be happy to look at designing a rural component into the program or devising a separate program which would encompass loan forgiveness or repayment assistance for graduates that went to the rural communities to provide legal services.

Assemblyman Anderson asked for clarification of how the formula worked. He asked if the money was from university dollars as opposed to a grant from the state. Responding, Ms. Smith said the money provided to the graduate would be used to repay their lenders; whether through a federal loan or a private loan. The money provided to repay the loans was yet to be determined and could come from many sources such as a private

donation to the law school to fund a specific program or from a state bar committee, such as The Access to Justice Committee that had funds available for such a purpose. She mentioned that some of the states received funding from the legislature. She said there were different sources that could be looked at when setting up the program and getting it implemented.

Chairman McGinness interjected that there were rural communities that lacked the hard dollars to pay students, but could provide housing and asked if that could be coordinated through the placement office at the law school. In response, Dean Morgan indicated that they would be happy to work on coordinating subsidized housing through the placement office at the school and it would be attractive to students. He thought it would be a great incentive to entice students to the rural community. He said the school graduated very qualified people and they could have a state-wide impact.

Senator Washington asked if raising the tuition and taking a percent to fund the externship or loan-forgiveness programs in rural areas had been considered. Dean Morgan said that was an excellent idea and they were in the process of raising tuition, and a substantial part of the tuition, pursuant to the Board of Regents, was for scholarships. He said there was room to raise tuition beyond the current increase and a future increase, coordinated with the Board of Regents, could be a source of funding for the programs. Senator Washington asked if the Board of Regents would be in agreement with an additional tuition increase to fund the programs. Responding, Dean Morgan said the Board of Regents would work with the law school on this program and they had an excellent relationship with them. He said the mission of the law school was to provide community service and the Board of Regents was in agreement with the mission and this program was in concurrence with the mission. Senator Washington asked if the students would serve in areas where there were indigent needs such as legal services in the rural communities. Dean Morgan stressed that the loan forgiveness/loan rebate program was designed to encourage law students to serve in indigent communities. He indicated that Clark County Legal Services, Nevada Legal Services, Washoe Legal Service and the Volunteer Attorneys for Rural Nevada were among placements that were authorized and devoted to serving indigent communities. He said there was no program designed for the rural communities and they were discussing programs that would encourage students to serve as externs in the rural communities after they graduated. Dean Morgan said when the program was designed; the main focus was to provide services to indigent people in the rural communities.

Vice Chairman Marvel asked if any students were helping in the district courts. He asked how tuition in Nevada compared to other western states and how many students stayed in Nevada after graduation. Dean Morgan said some students were placed in district courts, mainly in Clark and Washoe County. The only students that served as externs in district courts in rural counties were Douglas County and Winnemucca, but they were hoping to improve the number. He said students were externs while in school and after graduation they served as law clerks. Dean Morgan said tuition was a little below average for public law schools nationwide and above average for the Rocky Mountain states. When compared to California, the tuition was very low due to the funding crisis in California. Dean Morgan said approximately 90 percent of students that graduated stayed in Southern Nevada and part of the reason was that they saw Nevada as a place they wanted to live. He stressed that the school had a substantial preference for Nevada residents in the admission process and 75 to 80 percent of first-year students were Nevada residents.

Vice Chairman Marvel asked the success ratio of students that passed the Nevada Bar. Responding, Dean Morgan said the overall state pass rate was 60 percent for first-time takes which long-term was not a good thing for law schools. He said the average bar passage rate in the country was 75 percent. He claimed the Nevada Bar was one of the most rigorous exams in the country and they were working to improve the pass rate, curriculum and academic support services to the students.

Chairman McGinness thanked Dean Morgan and staff and said the program would benefit rural Nevada.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 10, 2004 ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING.

Chairman McGinness returned to Agenda Item II and requested a motion for approval of the minutes from the March 10, 2004 Advisory Committee meeting.

ASSEMBLYMAN ANDERSON MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 10, 2004 ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY VICE CHAIRMAN MARVEL.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VIII. DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM IN RURAL NEVADA.

Judge Papez said the Advisory Committee meeting in Ely, on March 10, 2004 had set priorities and made recommendations for improvements for the criminal justice system in rural Nevada. He referred to Exhibit D and said the conceptual design and construction cost estimate for a White Pine Criminal Justice Facility was information that the Committee requested previously. The estimate was from ten years ago and Judge Papez asked Ganthner Melby LLC to provide updated budget figures for the plan. He said that at the time it was designed there was a jail involved and now that was not being considered. He indicated that a courthouse facility in Ely would cost approximately \$8 million with the add-ons for architectural fees, site preparation and current building codes.

Chairman McGinness directed the Committee to page 69 of the meeting packet, and indicated that a number one priority and major expenditure recommended from the Advisory Committee was the White Pine County Courthouse.

Vice Chairman Marvel asked if there were any major incidents in the White Pine County Courthouse. Responding, Judge Papez said a few months ago two inmates from the Ely State Prison got into a fight in the holding facility. The prison staff was able to separate them very quickly but it created a commotion in the facility and one inmate received injuries to his ear. Another incident happened a few years back when prison staff had to take control of an inmate who was causing a problem. He indicated that they were very lucky that nothing catastrophic had happened yet at the facility. Chairman McGinness added for those that were not present at the meeting in Ely, that the witness, juror and the judge were so close in the courtroom that they could touch hands. The facility was built in 1906. Current regulations had caught up with the facility. A regional juvenile detention center was also needed. He said the rural counties were willing to look at different ways to generate funds to build the facility. Chairman McGinness interjected and said the tax cap in White Pine County caused a problem.

Vice Chairman Marvel asked if a site was selected for a juvenile detention facility. Judge Papez said there was no particular site but Ely was a good central location since most of the inmates came from there or Lincoln County. He said they explored the possibility of taking the Lincoln County inmates to Clark County but they were full and lacked beds. Vice Chairman Marvel asked if Tonopah or Pahrump would be a centrally located potential site. Responding, Judge Papez indicated that Pahrump would not help Ely and Tonopah transport their juveniles to Hawthorne. He said that Ely was the most centrally located county and correct place for a facility. He said that Eureka County helped fund the Elko juvenile facility during the big mining boom and as a result, Elko County has been good to Ely and provided rooms at a discounted rate.

Vice Chairman Marvel asked if there were any additional resources in White Pine County. Judge Papez responded that the Robinson Project Mine was in escrow and was scheduled to reopen in August or September 2005. He acknowledged it would eventually bring economic relief to Ely but it would take a few years for the net proceeds to come in.

Senator Washington asked for the estimated cost for a juvenile detention facility and asked if the cost included all the assessments and environmental studies that were required. Judge Papez responded that last year the county was able to acquire a needs assessment grant and an initial projection for a secure, small, ten-bed facility with all necessary federal requirements for holding juveniles was approximately \$2.7 million.

Chairman McGinness suggested that the Committee hold on to the recommendations from the Advisory Committee for the June meeting.

IX. DISCUSSION OF TRANSITIONAL HOUSING AND POTENTIAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS.

Jackie Crawford, Director, DOC, referred to Exhibit E and advised that property had been located for Casa Grande and was unanimously approved by the Clark County Commission. The property was located on Russell and Wynn Road in Las Vegas and was approximately six acres and surrounded by industry. The Clark County Commission felt it was a good project and were very supportive and there was no opposition after DOC explained the concerns of the people. The package was presented to the Board of Examiners on June 8, 2004 and the Interim Finance Committee meeting on June 16, 2004.

Glen Whorton, Department of Corrections, directed the Committee to Exhibit E and explained the male and female population projections for the transitional center that were provided by the contractors to the Department of Administration. He said there was a 2.5 annual percent of increase in male and female populations and that reflected the history of the last couple of years in the department. He said since January 2004 there was a significant increase in the populations and annualized it indicated a six percent growth rate. The department had not met the expectations of population projection from the last session and had not grown as fast as projected. Mr. Whorton discussed the prison count sheet and said 93 percent of the population was male and seven percent was female and presently there were over 2,200 inmates on minimum custody representing 20.5 percent of the overall population. He said over 1,900 inmates were men and 311 were women. He said looking at the history, there had been a higher percent of minimum custody inmates but 340 of the medium custody inmates were from Wyoming and Washington and that artificially inflated the medium custody numbers. Approximately 20 percent were minimum custody, 55 percent medium custody, 20 percent closed custody and five percent waiting in intake units for classification. Mr. Whorton said it was difficult keeping the medium population up because the population was not as high as thought and the people that do not come to prison are those individuals who were the low-level offenders and the candidate pool for the minimum custody facilities. He said given what has happened since the first of the year, DOC was concerned about the fact that there might be a bubble of these types of individuals coming through, or the trend might be that the population was on the rise again and when it rises, the need for minimum custody beds rises.

Senator Washington asked what the projection was based on and what were the indicators. Responding, Mr. Whorton explained the way the population projection was taken from historical information. It took each individual model and applied it based upon the probabilities and modeled their passage through the criminal justice system of Nevada and drops them out, in some cases circles them back in as a parole violator. The projection was indicated by looking at the stock population, intake population and parole population for 120 months. He indicated that the projection was still a best guess. He said that woman's populations were extremely volatile because they are such a small group. He said Nevada was extremely difficult to project due the size of the state and all it would take was for one judge to change their philosophy or the way they sentence. Mr. Whorton continued with the long-range capital improvement plans and master plan that was developed below:

- 07/05 - Open phase 1 reentry center (Casa Grande).
- Close Warm Springs Conservation Center (Unit 3).
- 02/06 - Open Southern Nevada Correctional Center as a young offender facility.
- 01/07 - Wyoming inmates return home.
- 09/07 - Humboldt Conservation Camp rebuild and expansion.

- Open northern transition center.
- Close northern restitution center.
- 10/07 - Washington inmates return home.
- 07/08 - Open 50 women's restitution center.
- 09/08 - Open southern regional medical facility.
- 01/09 - Open expanded Carlin Conservation Camp.
- Close Wells Conservation Camp.
- 02/10 - Convert Warm Springs Correctional Camp to a medium facility.
- 07/10 - Convert Indian Springs Work Camp.
- 03/12 - Close Nevada State Prison.
- Open 3 bowtie units at Northern Nevada Correctional Center.
- 06/12 - Open prison # 8.
- 12/12 - Open 156-bed expansion at Southern Nevada Women's Facility.

Correctional

Assemblyman Anderson asked about the dramatic changes in the numbers in the long-range CIP plan. He asked if work experience programs were envisioned in Casa Grande placement. Ms. Crawford said that Casa Grande was envisioned to have a comparable type program and funding was requested for programs. She said that 4,000 inmates a year were released into the communities and how they were released was important to recognize. She said a study needed to be done on the inmates that succeeded with programs and assistance and indicated that the recidivism rate could be greatly reduced with programs. Ms. Crawford indicated that there was a demand and request for inmates to work in the local communities because they were drug free, willing to work and they had the desire to succeed.

Assemblyman Anderson asked if the new and updated figures had been reviewed from the earlier numbers given to the Committee. Mr. Whorton said it was the same population projection from the Advisory Committee meeting. He said the plans would change constantly as decisions and directions come forward from the stakeholders. In terms of managing the population and even with the growing population and the number of beds needed, the state was in a good situation at this point. Mr. Whorton said the department had the opportunity to send home the medium populations from Wyoming and Washington. He said that during the budget crisis a cell-house closed because it was inefficient and the population was too spread out. There was a medium security institution at the Southern Nevada Correctional Facility that was waiting utilization and beds were available for inmates.

Senator Rhoads referred to Exhibit E, tab A, and asked if the 27 escaped inmates were captured. Mr. Whorton responded that the individuals had walked away from the institutions, restitution centers and honor camps and did not escape from the maximum security prison. He said one of the escapees had run away from the Nevada State Prison in 1974 and was included in the number.

Senator Washington noted that he was concerned with the young offenders and asked if it was a growing population and was there a projected cost and site located for a juvenile facility. Ms. Crawford answered that depending on the age bracket, there were 607 youthful offenders from the age of 22 down and approximately 180 of them were between the ages of 14 to 18. She indicated that blended sentencing was being looked at. Many of the youthful offenders were street-tough, but they were still kids and she was not sure that the state of Nevada wanted to house them with the adult offenders. She said an area was designated for the youthful offenders at the Southern Desert Correctional Center and subsequently the population was growing so rapidly that they had to be relocated to an isolated area at High Desert. She said the main emphasis was programming and juveniles were single-celled. She said some of the youthful offenders were violent and a threat to others and could not be placed with other younger offenders. Ms. Crawford indicated that more staff and programming was required and the average cost was \$78 per day for incarceration. She said that the Southern Nevada Institution was vacant and would be an ideal institution to house the offenders. She said the decision to house juveniles would have to come from the Governor and legislature and she highly recommended looking at places for them.

Senator Washington said that the Juvenile Justice Committee had looked at blended sentencing for juveniles and the issue had been looked at for some time and it was good to know that the DOC was participating in alternatives. Responding, Ms. Crawford said the department worked closely with all the stakeholders possible and they felt it was part of their responsibility to network and come up with solutions to present to the legislature. She said it was a difficult situation since the number of juveniles fluctuated from year-to-year. The issues were studied with experts and the department would present the information to the legislature so they could make the best decisions for the juveniles and the state.

Senator Washington asked if there were any long-range plans for the sex offenders that were eventually being released into the community. Mr. Whorton responded that there were statutory requirements in law, (Chapter 209) regarding the placement of sex offenders in the community. He said there was no effort from DOC to provide any specific housing for sex offenders. Currently, there were 1,900 sex offenders, exclusively housed in medium custody institutions with a few in the maximum security prison. He said there was a program at the Lovelock Correctional Center for sex offenders and DOC worked very hard to streamline the process and ensure that the psychiatric panel required by statute was an accountable and consistent process. He said DOC purposely softened the population at Lovelock Correctional Center to try to give the individuals the opportunity to come out of protective segregation and into a program to deal with their issues and not to be a burden on the state. He said the offenders became very difficult and needy when locked in segregation.

Assemblyman Anderson said the blended sentencing was a larger issue for the state due to things that had happened in Clark County, particularity with the youthful DUI offenders and he asked how the additional costs were anticipated for operating the programs for the youthful offenders. He asked about the population increase as the offenders were moved into the blended sentencing and the possibility of having more of a population increase. He asked if there was a projection model. Responding, Ms. Crawford noted that DOC was in the infancy stages of studying the blended sentencing for juvenile justice offenders. She voiced that blended sentencing would expand the juvenile justice system and eventually would transition the individual into an adult system; however, it could also be reversed. She noted that Colorado and Texas had an interesting concept; they brought in juvenile offenders and if they were successful during the juvenile status, they would go back to court to have their sentence reduced. Assemblyman Anderson asked if the Texas model was operated by the correctional facility of the state or by the Division of Child and Family Services. Ms. Crawford said that Texas had a Juvenile Justice Commission and a Juvenile Division that managed all the youthful offenders. She said that Colorado sentenced the juveniles to the adult system; however, they were housed in a young adult facility and after a period of ten years, if they had a long sentence, the juveniles would go back to the parole board to have their sentence reduced.

Mr. Whorton said that the contractors do not evaluate the intake population based on age. When the population projections originally started back in the 1980s, there was an opportunity to predict the intake population based upon on age, gender and race. The information system was set up to provide that information. The state does not have the ability to breakout the age, gender and race cohort in the community population. He said Nevada did have the support system to break out the intake population for the communities so the estimate was much broader and lacked the data to base information on.

Assemblyman Anderson said that youthful offenders had a longer period of time to be criminally active and that increased their chance to recidivate and therefore money spent in programs to change their behavior had the potential to have a greater impact by putting those services at the juvenile level rather than for a medium age or older part of the prison population where their costs were more health associated. He asked if that was the right or wrong assumption. Ms. Crawford affirmed that Assemblyman Anderson was correct and all studies had revealed that the more services and programs provided to the young offender, it had a great impact on them and they had a higher success rate. She said that the youthful offenders turned around more quickly than adult offenders and there was growth with juveniles. She explained that there was a recent, very high-profile individual that had grown and matured and now he provided tutoring alongside educators and she said he was a viable person in the community. She said that education and counseling was the main focus for juveniles and

they needed to be single-celled so they would not be contaminated by others. She said there was a lot of potential for juveniles and Nevada would be wise to place emphasis on the young offender population. She thought the outcome would be very positive.

Chairman McGinness questioned the custody level for the Casa Grande program. Responding, Ms. Crawford reiterated that the offenders were non-violent, had four to six months left, had a parole plan and once they had a job and housing they could be paroled to the streets after four months.

Assemblyman Anderson said that sending the sex offender population out into society without follow-up was a great fear in the communities. He asked if the recidivism rate was greater in the Casa Grande individuals. Responding, Mr. Whorton said the recidivism rate for Casa Grande was generally higher because of the types of offenses they had committed. He said it was much easier for an individual to write a bad check, use drugs or to burglarize or steal a car and it would happen more frequently than to murder another person. He said people that committed a murder had the lowest recidivism rate of any offenders because they were locked up for a long time. The logic would be that if there was intervention on the Casa Grande population, the recidivism rate would be reduced and the need or opportunities to return to the offensive behavior would be reduced.

Ms. Crawford said that if she had gone out to the community and to the Clark County Commission and told them that she was going to house sex offenders in the community, there would be no Casa Grande. She said there was a stigma attached to sex offenders in the community and inside prison. There were isolated cases that were so horrible that the fear carried over to the entire sex offender population.

Ross Whitaker introduced himself and said he was there to represent Birgit Baker, Director, Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR), and said they supported the DOC and the Casa Grande project. DETR would work to provide employment and training services to the individuals as they leave incarceration and re-enter the labor market. DETR had been involved in other activities over the years and served on the Going Home Prepared Committee. They recently toured High Desert State Prison and began taking referrals through the Going Home Prepared Program. He indicated that DETR was a member of the Southern Nevada Work Force Investment Board which administers the Work Force Investment Act Program in Southern Nevada. There were many programs available under the act and the entities that made up the Nevada Job Connect System were ready to help provide the individuals the services they needed to return to work. He indicated there were three offices in Southern Nevada to help people find employment.

Chairman McGinness asked if the offices were relatively close to Casa Grande and was DETR planning to have an on-site office. Responding, Mr. Whitaker said the closest office was four to five miles away and all three were on bus routes so transportation was available. He said that a resource center would be placed at Casa Grande and they would possibly provide assistance on a part time basis.

Richard Varner, Deputy Chief, Parole and Probation (P&P), said they were working with the DOC to provide assistance in the Casa Grande Program. He said that P&P had two social workers that were hired through The Going Home Prepared project and they would be on-site at Casa Grande.

Assemblyman Anderson asked if P&P had the same level of difficulty with monitoring inmates that returned to the rural community or had the difficulty increased. Due to the burdens required by legislation, he asked if P&P also faced supervision problems like the mental health, DUI and drug counseling. Responding, Mr. Varner said it was the same and the caseloads were growing constantly, therefore the amount of supervision that they could provide to individuals decreased. He said the main increases in caseloads were in Reno and Las Vegas. P&P finds resources to help people reintegrate into the community. Mr. Varner said that most of the time there were people in the community or family support to house the offenders upon release. He said out of 2,815 pre-parole investigations conducted, 337 were delayed substantially due to housing problems and a majority of them were sex offenders. He reiterated that there were no halfway or residential houses to take sex offenders.

Assemblyman Anderson said he was concerned that people came out of the prison system, went to P&P, and then went back into the system on a procedural technicality. They would then come back out with zero time and back into the community without any follow-up. He said it was not only for the sex offenders, but the serious offenders that had not been programmed through some correctional processing.

Senator Washington expressed his concern for the process of licensing and certification of halfway houses. He asked if P&P or the Department of Public Safety would be willing to move the process for certification from the Department of Human Resources to allow for a seamless process, and to work with the correct people so the process was not so confusing and difficult for the entities that wished to get licensed or certified. Mr. Varner said the process could be looked at but with the current caseloads, there was no available staff to take on the function. Senator Washington said he was aware there would be a cost involved, but he felt that procedurally it was the best way to control the facilities and make sure they were in compliance with regulations of statutes. He said it would benefit the Committee if P&P looked at the numbers for staffing and what it would take to move the licensing and certification from the Division of Health to the Department of Public Safety.

Chairman McGinness asked Mr. Varner if he would talk to Mike Willden, Director, Department of Human Resources and obtain some information regarding the halfway housing certification issues. Mr. Varner indicated that there would have to be changes to the statutes to allow P&P the ability to regulate the houses.

Lon DeWeese, Chief Financial Officer, Housing Division introduced Debbie Para, Grants Manager for Home Program which provided funding for the voucher program created in cooperation with the DOC. He said the voucher program was one of many programs that the Housing Division had used for home funding along with other sources of funding. In 2002 the division established and the administration accepted a strategic plan with the main goal of addressing the states housing needs for strategic populations as well as for specialty populations. Mr. DeWeese said that prior to the last session, all members of the legislature received a copy of the specialty housing needs population report. Eight separate groups were recognized and parolees were identified as the smallest group in numbers. The program that the Housing Division worked with DOC on had the smallest population and was designed to work with funds from the Home Program that were aimed to be provided to The Ridge House, a non-profit organization to service and interface with their outsourcing program to deal with the parolee population. All of the populations addressed were pilot programs that were designed to prove or disapprove that certain forms of funding and program design would be successful so that alternative sources in long-term funding can be created outside of the limited funds from the Home Program.

Dorothy Nash Holmes, Correctional Programs Administrator, DOC, clarified that the pilot project for The Ridge House was for Reno only and would not affect Casa Grande. She said DOC met with housing authorities from rural, northern and southern Nevada and there was an 18 to 22 month waiting list.

Chairman McGinness noted that Senator Rhoads had left the meeting to catch a flight and was excused.

X. PUBLIC TESTIMONY.

Chairman McGinness asked if there was any public testimony to come before the Committee.

Assemblyman David Parks, present in Las Vegas wanted to commend Director Crawford for her vision and effort toward developing a reentry strategy for preparing and managing successful reentry and release of offenders. He said the program was considered in the last two legislative sessions and the issue was discussed at great length. He reiterated that the reentry program was a fiscally sound project and the payoff to the state would be significantly greater in the numbers of reduced recidivism inmates. He said he had been briefed on the project by members of DOC as it has proceeded forward and found that it was a program that surpassed what they had hoped to accomplish. He thanked the Committee for allowing him to make his comments.

Chairman McGinness thanked Assemblyman Parks and asked if there were any other comments from Las

Vegas.

XI. DISCUSSION OF FUTURE MEETING DATE.

Chairman McGinness said the next meeting was scheduled for June 22, 2004. He asked if any Committee members had any problems with the date and no one objected. He confirmed the meeting would be on June 22, 2004 and said recommendations for the legislature would be finalized at that meeting.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

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Respectfully submitted,

Donna Thomas
Secretary

Approved by:

Senator Mike McGinness, Chairman

Date