



**Minutes of the Meeting of the
New Mexico Sentencing Commission
10:00 a.m.
June 16, 2022**

via Zoom

Members Present	Members Absent	Others Attending	NMSC Staff Present
Bob Cleavall, Acting Chair	Hon. Daniel A. Bryant (DMCJA)	Ann Lyn Hall (Prosperity Works)	Linda Freeman
Jennifer Albright (AOC)	Sheriff Mark Cage (House Minority)	Kim Chavez Cook (LOPD)	Amanda Armstrong
Marit Andrews (for PED)	Alisa Lauer (CYFD)	Megan Dorsey	Douglas Carver
Cindy Aragon (State Bar)	Angela “Spence” Pacheco (Speaker)	Monica Ault (FFJC)	Jamey Cook
Bennett Baur (LOPD)	Martin Suazo (Pro Tem)	Amber Farrell (FFJC)	Keri Thiel
Regina Chacon (DPS)	Hon. Fred T. Van Soelen (DMCJA)	Ellen Rabin (LFC)	
Hon. John Chavez (NM Sct)			
Mark Donatelli (Speaker)			
Gregory Gaudette (Senate Minority)			
Sheriff Glenn Hamilton (NM Counties)			
Claire Harwell (Governor)			
Brady Horn (NM Sct)			
Anne Kelly (AGO)			
April Land (UNMSOL)			
Michael Lilley (Pro Tem)			
Melanie Martinez (NMCD)			
Anita Mesa (BHSD)			

David Schmidt (Pro Tem)			
Clint Wellborn (NMDAA)			

I. Welcome and Introductions. The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. Acting Chair Bob Cleavall welcomed members, guests, and staff to the meeting.

II. Approval of minutes for the March 31, 2022 meeting. The minutes of the meeting were approved by unanimous vote.

III. Staff Report.

Linda Freeman, Executive Director, New Mexico Sentencing Commission (NMSC), informed the Commission that the grants process under the Crime Reduction Grants Act has been concluded. Details are in the Grants Committee report later in the meeting. She also informed the Commission of the various reports and research on which staff is working, including the Prison Population Report, a length of stay report for county detention facilities, and research concerning the use of fines and fees in the state. She asked Commission members if they would be interested in volunteering for the working group to draft this year’s Commission strategic plan. And finally, she said if any Commission members wished to attend the National Association of Sentencing Commission’s annual meeting in August in Portland, OR, they should let her know as soon as possible so travel arrangements could be made. She informed the Commission that there are enough funds in the staff development category that five to six staff members should be able to attend, and that there were enough funds for five to seven commissioners.

Douglas Carver, Deputy Director, NMSC, informed the Commission that he and Executive Director Freeman continued their engagement with the task force formed to look at the possibility of unifying the state’s prison and jail systems; that task force seemed to be tending towards finding ways that processes between the two systems could be streamlined and perhaps, in certain areas, such as behavioral health, consolidated. He also informed the Commission that the Legislature’s interim Courts, Corrections, and Justice Committee (CCJ) has a new staff attorney; the committee has proposed a large number of meetings for the coming interim, but it seems that they all will be in Santa Fe. Deputy Director Carver let the Commission know that he has reached out to the new CCJ staff attorney about the statutorily-mandated presentations to CCJ that the Commission is required to make.

Executive Director Freeman added that she had reached out to Jessie Halliday, Senior Policy Specialist Crime and Justice Institute – the group that is facilitating the meetings of the jail/prison task force – about presenting findings to the Commission at a future meeting.

IV. Prosperity Works’ Efforts with Former Criminal Justice Populations.

Ann Lyn Hall, Chief Executive Officer, Prosperity Works, gave a presentation to the Commission discussing how Prosperity Works helps people of low income amass capital to transform their financial situation. Ms. Hall took on the CEO role in February. Prosperity Works has worked in the community for 20 years, with the goal of ending poverty and bringing people out of poverty with high-impact strategies. This is important when thinking of how to get citizens returning to society from imprisonment reintegrated into society. Prosperity Works’ mission is to bring economic prosperity to all New Mexicans. They partner with non-profits and financial institutions throughout the state, in urban and rural areas, including Fathers Building Futures, which works with the previously incarcerated. Assets, Ms. Hall noted, stabilize families, increase agency, and strengthen communities.

One of their principal strategies is the use of individual development accounts. These are matched savings accounts for low-income people, at a four-to-one match. If someone saves \$1,000, their savings will be matched with \$4,000. The goal for the savings can be home ownership, home repair, to capitalize a small business, higher education, or to purchase a vehicle to get to work. Prosperity Works provides coaching to help people attain their goal. Creating these accounts provides sustained savings over time, combined with financial capability training and an asset plan. This results in creating a relationship with a financial institution and developing long-term savings habits.

Prosperity Works worked with the Urban Institute to conduct a study to assess the impact of these matched savings accounts. The study found that they reduced financial hardships and reduced reliance on alternative check cashing/payday loan types of institutions. Ms. Hall noted that Prosperity Works was pleased with the recent legislation capping these kinds of loans at 36%, down from a cap of 175%. The individual development accounts helped people get out of poverty in 18 months, which is the time it generally takes to amass the \$1,000. Ms. Hall offered to send copies of the Urban Institute study to the members of the Commission. She asked that anyone who had further questions, or who knew of organizations that would like to partner with Prosperity Works, to contact her.

Members of the Commission asked questions about and discussed the interest rates on small loans, Prosperity Works' collaboration with state agencies, the new financial literacy standards incorporated into the school curriculum by the Public Education Department, and in what manner Prosperity Works worked with the immigrant community.

V. Strategic Plan.

Executive Director Freeman told the members of the Commission that, given how successful the facilitated process for the strategic plan had been the previous year, she would use that process again for this year's strategic plan. Two members participated last year; she hopes to have three or four members participate this year. This year's meeting will be in person rather than over Zoom. Members should let her know if they would like to be part of the strategic plan process.

VI. Report from the Grants Committee.

Keri Thiel, Staff Attorney, NMSC, gave the Commission a report on the awarding of grants under the Crime Reduction Grant Act. She noted that there were 21 applications from Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils (CJCC) representing nine different Judicial Districts. The applications were grouped into project areas: there were three for staffing (two for retention, one for a new hire); two for reentry; three for pretrial; four for diversion projects; and nine for court services (which included training, program incentives, and the like). Sixteen of the applications were fully funded. Four received less than they had asked, but for one of those it was because they had requested monies over two years. One application received more than they requested.

Executive Director Freeman informed the Commission that NMSC staff had conducted extensive outreach to the CJCCs, including attending CJCC meetings. Sharing the draft minutes of the Grants Committee, she showed the Commission the wide gamut of requests, both in the projects in the applications and the funding amounts requested in the various grants.

Ms. Thiel further informed the Commission that there was \$2,100,000 total in grant requests, out of a possible pool of \$2,300,000. The total amount awarded was \$1,771,518.30. The balance will be awarded in a second round of funding. Those applications will be due on October 28, 2022, and will be reviewed at a

meeting of the Grants Committee to be held on November 9, 2022. These applications will be for half-year projects.

Cindy Aragon, a member of the Grants Committee, told the Commission that the process had gone very well this year. She had particular praise for the new computer program that allowed for easier review of and comment on the applications. Deputy Director Carver noted that Research Director Nancy Shane and Ms. Thiel had made great improvements in this year's process, especially considering the tremendous increase in the amount of funds available and the large number of applications, which more than doubled all of the grants awarded in prior years.

Members of the Commission asked questions about and discussed which Judicial Districts had not submitted an application from their CJCC; why certain grants were funded in full while others were not; what level of funding for the grants might be expected in the coming fiscal year; whether the grant monies were reverting or non-reverting; the prospects of creating a dedicated grant fund for these monies; staff follow up for the grants; and public defender and district attorney coordination on future grant requests.

VII. Report from the Reform and Criminal Code Update Committees.

Deputy Director Carver informed the Commission that the work of these two committees had been combined, as approved by the Commission at its last meeting. Working groups have been formed and should start meeting soon.

VIII. Public Comment.

There was no public comment offered.

IX. Next Meeting.

The committee scheduled its next meeting for August 17, 2022.

X. Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 11:22 a.m.