Criminal & Juvenile Justice Information Advisory Group Holds Inaugural Meeting

The Criminal and Juvenile Justice Information Advisory Group began its first meeting by holding elections for leadership positions. By a unanimous vote, the following candidates were elected to one-year terms:

- Deb Kerschner, Chair
- Amy Schmidt, First Vice Chair
- Steve Washburn, Second Vice Chair

Decisions about meeting frequency and Advisory Group by-laws will be made when the group meets again in February/March. Any member interested in helping to draft by-laws to be reviewed at that meeting should contact Dana Gotz at the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension.

The Advisory Group operates under the authority of Minnesota Statute 299C.65. Information about Advisory Group activities (minutes, Extras, reports, etc.) will be posted online.

Task Force Sub-Committees Established to Dig Into Criminal Justice Data Issues

The Advisory Group was preceded by two statutorily-created groups: the Criminal and Juvenile Justice Information Policy Group and Task Force. As part of their strategic planning process which led to the creation of the Advisory Group, the Policy Group and Task Force established sub-committees to examine several areas of ongoing concern in the area of criminal justice information integration.

**Data & Identification Standards**

**Chair:** Oded Galili, oded.galili@state.mn.us

**Focus:** Members are examining existing data and identification standards and are working to identify ways to improve standards for identifying individuals and sharing identifying information.

**Data Practices**

**Chair:** Laurie Beyer-Kropeunske, laurie.beyer-kropeunske@state.mn.us

**Focus:** Develop recommendations for the Advisory Group on data practices laws. They are focused on learning from criminal justice practitioners and the public what is and isn’t working with Minnesota data practices laws.

**Collaborative Relationships & Funding**

**Chair:** Amy Schmidt, aschmidt@bloomingtonmn.gov

**Focus:** Vet funding requests and proposals related to information integration. Identify opportunities for building collaborative relationships from criminal justice practitioners and others which may inform or promote the work of the Advisory Group.

Advisory Group members interested in joining one of these sub-committees should contact Dana Gotz.

Note: The information in this publication is an unofficial summary of activity. It should not be considered official meeting minutes or an official program status report. Information subject to change.
Sub-Committees Provide Progress Report for Advisory Group

Representatives from the sub-committees reported to the Advisory Group on progress made since the Task Force’s final meeting in May 2016.

Data & Identification Standards

Sub-committee chair Oded Galili briefed Advisory Group members about the steps that would be needed to reduce or eliminate instances when a criminal act is associated with the wrong person.

- Determine a common method for identifying a person and tying a record to that person.
- Improve data quality so that offenses are correctly associated with the person who committed them.
- Move information between systems to prevent errors.

Currently, the type of identifying information collected depends on the type of encounter with law enforcement. It may just be a name/DOB or in certain cases a photo, fingerprints or DNA are also collected.

The group acknowledges that consistent collection of a photo, fingerprints or a biometric identifier would help, but is not always practical and in many circumstances would require a statute change. The group will provide additional details at the next Advisory Group meeting.

Data Practices

This sub-committee is conducting interviews with criminal justice practitioners and the public to learn what is and isn’t working with Minnesota data practices laws. Management Analysis & Development and the University of Minnesota is helping with this effort.

During interviews with criminal justice practitioners several themes emerged.

- **What works** – improvements in databases have been helpful and data is shared and protected properly.
- **What doesn’t work** – filling data requests is costly, labor intensive, and data laws are inconsistently applied.
  Respondents were also concerned about third parties obtaining the data and profiting from it (ex. Mugshots).
- **How can things be improved** – among many ideas, respondents suggested uniform statewide training on data laws, generic forms, fees and statutory changes.

Interviews with members of the public are still in the works.

The goal of this group is to become the research arm for the legislature on data practices topics.

Collaborative Relationships & Funding

The group worked to identify and vet project ideas for Policy Group consideration for forwarding to the legislature for funding consideration. Three projects were reviewed and approved by the Task Force, but ultimately were not reviewed or approved by the Policy Group before it was dissolved.

- The Bureau of Criminal Apprehension requested $4.1 million for a two-year project to redesign and develop a new predatory offender registration system which includes the Predatory Offender Database, the law enforcement website and the public non-compliant website.
- The Minnesota Counties Computer Cooperative Corrections User Group and the Department of Corrections (DOC) requested $200,000 to develop software to improve the process of managing an offender’s release from prison into community supervision.
- The Minnesota County Attorneys Association and the Board of Public Defense requested $1.25 million to build an electronic path for documents to pass from the courts to county attorneys and public defenders, and the development of a notification process via case and content management systems when new documents are filed.

Advisory Group members discussed the challenges of funding integration projects through the primary state agency involved in the project as it may compete with other agency priorities. The group discussed the possibility of requesting funding from the legislature specifically for individual integration projects as a way to avoid the issue.

Members were encouraged to share Advisory Group Extra with their organizations/associations to keep them informed about the group’s activities and generate information about ongoing integration needs.

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Watch for information on the next Advisory Group Meeting in your Inbox