

Georgia Public Defender Standards Council

MINUTES

4/14/2014

11:00 AM

GPDSC CENTRAL OFFICE, SUITE 200
104 Marietta Street NW, Atlanta GA 30303

MEETING CALLED BY	Chairman Ron Cross
TYPE OF MEETING	Regular Meeting
FACILITATOR	W. Travis Sakrison, Executive Director
NOTE TAKER	Cheryl Karounos/Lucas Brainerd
COURT REPORTER	JPA Reporting, 404-853-1811
ATTENDEES	Council members present: D. Sims, R. Cross, D. Seagraves, L Paris, Hon. A. McGarity (by phone), Hon. M. Miller, E. Tolley, D. Kennedy, J. Hankins, K. Beal, C. Karounos. Other attendees included Stefan Ritter, State Dept. of Law, and members of the Southern Center for Human Rights, Circuit Public Defenders, and GPDSC Central Office staff.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ron Cross at 11:00 AM

APPROVAL OF AGENDA	R. CROSS	Agenda unanimously approved.
APPROVAL OF MINUTES	R. CROSS	Minutes from prior meeting unanimously approved.
DIRECTOR UPDATE	T. SAKRISON	Mr. Sakrison introduced the joint project with the Department of Corrections. Congratulated the Capital Defender on a productive year. Announced 10 th anniversary of the GPDSC coming up this year. S. Merritt updated the council on the brief written on behalf of the GACD proposing a Rule 48 amendment. Mr. Merritt updated the council on the Detention Assessment Instrument. D. Seagraves elaborated. Mr. Sakrison announced he was traveling to Savannah to speak with the ACCG about Juvenile. Updated the council on HB 242. Introduced a joint project with GPAC on best practices and training. Announced the enlistment of a grant specialist to help all our agencies with grant funding.
BUDGET UPDATE	T. SAKRISON / A. ROSS	Mr. Sakrison announced that A. Ross is moving on from the agency and impressed upon the council the importance of his role in the agency. L. Olney taking over most of the budget responsibilities. Increase of a few million dollars on the base budget side and in both Program 1 and Program 2 for the amended 2014 budget. There are no longer any frozen attorney positions. Spending for indigent defense will be up 30% from when Mr. Sakrison took over as Director. There will be additional funding in the 2015 budget for merit increases in Program 2. R. Cross commended T. Sakrison for his relationship and negotiations with the Office of Budget and Management.
LEGISLATIVE UPDATE	T. SAKRISON / C. KAROUNOS	Mr. Sakrison announced that the legislative oversight committee was finally fully appointed; he was able to meet with the committee during this legislative session. SB 364 was more of a clean-up bill; didn't change anything too significant. Introduced L. Robinson who spoke to the council about SB 265, dealing with reentry, and SB 320, dealing with the creation of veterans' courts.
APPEALS UPDATE	J. RODGERS	J. Rodgers announced that the Appellate Division has expanded. Seven additional attorneys have been hired under the consent decree, and 4 additional staff attorneys to

service the southern part of the state have been hired. Updated and elaborated on the progress of the judicial luncheon series. Announced the launch of a two-tier program of training for the public defenders and upcoming trainings for appellate attorneys.

CONFLICTS UPDATE

T. SAKRISON

T. Sakrison acknowledged the daunting task of funding and commended J. Stokes on the job he has done. J. Stokes announced that conflicts is expanding through new staffing, new contractors, additional attorneys to take cases on a case-by-case basis. Informed the council that the feedback from the conflicts survey has been received from half the public defender offices.

OPT-OUT REVIEW

J. HANKINS

J. Hankins announced that it has been determined that the opt-out circuits are following the GPDSC guidelines for determining indigency. The council approved the opt-out indigency procedures.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Council agreed to set the date for the July meeting at a later time.
