

CONNECTICUT SENTENCING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

Thursday, June 26, 2025

MINUTES

Members Present: Judge Robin Pavia (Chair), John Santa (Vice Chair), Michael Gailor, Gary Roberge, John Day, Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, Jennifer Zaccagnini, Stephen Tavares, Jennifer Zito, Anna VanCleave, Daniel Karpowitz, Judge Elizabeth Bozzuto, Angel Quiros, Judge Gerald Harmon, Judge Joseph Schwartz, Len Fasano

Staff: Andrew Clark, Tommy Dowd, Chenoa Greenlee, Lydia Wileden, Mike Cronin, Jenna D'Ottavio, Matthew Hono, Rich Sparaco, Christian Isidoro, Valerie Godon, Ken Barone

Guests: Mary Janicki, Chris Burke, Rachel Mirsky, Randal Chinnock, Katie Doughan, CT-N

I. MEETING CONVENED

- Judge Robin Pavia convened the meeting at 3:31 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE 3.27.2025 MEETING

- The minutes from 3.27.2025 were approved.

III. REMEMBERING ROBERT FARR

- Judge Pavia acknowledged the passing of Robert Farr, who served on the Commission for 10 years.

IV. WELCOMING NEW MEMBER LEN FASANO

- Judge Pavia welcomed former Senator Len Fasano, who was recently appointed to the Commission. John Santa and Bill Dyson also offered words of welcome.
- Fasano expressed his appreciation and shared his enthusiasm about joining the Commission.
- Commission members introduced themselves to Fasano.

V. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

- Judge Pavia updated members on the results of the 2025 legislative session.
- The Commission submitted two proposals this session, both of which were included in House Bill 7259.
 - The first proposal was brought forward by Inspector General, and former Commission Chair, Robert Devlin. It sought to close a loophole in the police

chokehold statute by permitting chokeholds in defense of a third party, rather than just in self-defense.

- ☐ The proposal remained in House Bill 7259, which passed both chambers and was signed into law as Public Act 25-29.
- The second proposal sought to expand eligibility for the Supervised Diversionary Program to individuals with intellectual disabilities and autism.
 - ☐ The proposal was included in the version of the bill that passed the Judiciary Committee but was removed from the bill in the House of Representatives.

VI. COMMITTEE UPDATES:

a. Steering Committee:

- i. Recognizing Outgoing Executive Director Alex Tsarkov
 - Judge Pavia thanked outgoing Executive Director Alex Tsarkov for his service to the Commission and wished him well in his new role on the Board of Pardons and Paroles.
- ii. Executive Director Search Process
 - Ken Barone provided an update on the ongoing search process.
 - The Search Committee is currently finalizing the position description. Once completed, the Committee will post the position, conduct interviews, and identify qualified candidates.
 - The Committee aims to conclude the process in the fall.
 - Bill Dyson asked a clarifying question.
- iii. Recommendation: Designation of Interim Executive Director
 - Judge Pavia introduced Rich Sparaco, whom the Steering Committee unanimously voted to recommend as Interim Executive Director of the Commission.
 - Sparaco introduced himself to Commission members.
 - Bill Dyson and Jennifer Zito expressed their support for the appointment.
 - John Santa noted that the Steering Committee would develop a scope of services for the interim role.
 - The Commission unanimously voted to formally offer Sparaco the position.

b. Mental Health Subcommittee:

i. Update on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Study – Rachel Mirsky, Esq., Staff Attorney, Disability Rights Connecticut

- Rachel Mirsky provided the update.
 - The report remains on track for completion by its statutory deadline at the end of 2025.
 - The research team has conducted legal research, examined best practices, and interviewed a broad range of individuals from both the criminal justice and healthcare systems.
 - Notify Mirsky if you, or anyone you know, are willing to participate in a confidential interview.
- Bill Dyson asked a follow-up question.

ii. Other Updates

- Jennifer Zito provided the update.
 - The Mental Health Subcommittee continues to oversee progress on various reports, including (1) the Yale SEICHE Center study examining access to mental health services for individuals reentering society; (2) the Competency to Stand Trial report; and (3) the behavioral health diversionary program resource.
 - The next Subcommittee meeting is scheduled for July 14.
- Mike Gailor asked a follow-up question.

c. Criminal Procedure and Sentencing Subcommittee

- Judge Pavia announced that Deborah Del Prete Sullivan will be appointed as co-chair of the Criminal Procedure and Sentencing Subcommittee.
- Pavia reported that Judge Martin Cronin has completed the comparative section of the pretrial report. A draft has been shared with the Subcommittee co-chairs.
 - Both the comparative and quantitative sections of the pretrial report are expected to be completed by the end of the summer.
- Mike Gailor reported that the Subcommittee continues its work on the hate crimes and human trafficking reports.

VII. PRESENTATION ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE MURDER STUDY – Dr. Lydia Wileden, Assistant Research Professor, Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy

- Dr. Lydia Wileden presented on the domestic violence murder study.

- The study includes a comparative legal analysis and an examination of 20 years of murder and manslaughter data.
 - Dr. Wileden reviewed the initial findings with the Commission.
 - The research team will continue analyzing the data and drafting the report, and is seeking to engage with the Criminal Procedure and Sentencing Subcommittee as the work progresses.
- Mike Gailor, Anna VanCleave, Deb Sullivan, and Bill Dyson asked follow-up questions.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

- Andrew Clark informed members about the upcoming National Association of Sentencing Commissions (NASC) Annual Conference, which will be held on August 11–12 in Madison, Wisconsin.
 - Members interested in attending were encouraged to contact Clark.
- The next meeting will be held in person on September 11.
- John Santa adjourned the meeting at 5:05 p.m.