

# **INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS AND REVENUE**

## **Budget Review Subcommittee on Justice and Judiciary**

### **Minutes of the 1st Meeting of the 2020 Interim**

**July 8, 2020**

#### **Call to Order and Roll Call**

The 1st meeting of the Budget Review Subcommittee on Justice and Judiciary of the Interim Joint Committee on Appropriations and Revenue was held on Wednesday, July 8, 2020, at 9:00 AM, in Room 149 of the Capitol Annex. Senator Stephen West, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Stephen West, Co-Chair; Representative Jason Nemes, Co-Chair; Senators Denise Harper Angel, John Schickel, Robin L. Webb, and Whitney Westerfield; Representatives Daniel Elliott, Angie Hatton, Nima Kulkarni, and Jason Petrie.

Guests: Cookie Crews, Commissioner, Department of Corrections (DOC); Randy White, Deputy Commissioner of Adult Institutions, DOC; Nicolai Jilek, Commissioner, Department of Criminal Justice Training (DOCJT); and Frank Kubala, Ed.D., Director of Training Operations, DOCJT.

LRC Staff: Zachary Ireland, Savannah Wiley, and Benjamin Thompson

#### **Impact of COVID-19 on the Department of Criminal Justice Training**

Commissioner Nicolai Jilek provided an overview of the Department of Criminal Justice Training's (DOCJT) implementation of COVID-19 safety measures, such as reducing living arrangements from two to one recruit per room, as well as the reduction of class size to a maximum of 30 while ramping up capabilities to follow Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines while training three separate classes simultaneously. Commissioner Jilek stated that with new protocols the DOCJT will be able to train 210 officers per year, while traditionally DOCJT trained 250 new officers per year.

In response to questions from Chair West, Commissioner Jilek stated that as manpower diminishes in an agency, unless the agency can get Kentucky State Police or another nearby agency to assist them, it won't be able to perform its duties at as high a standard as would be normal. Commissioner Jilek noted that a Kentucky Law Enforcement Foundation Program Fund (KLEFPF) stipend of \$4,000 is provided to

officers yearly as long as they have at least 40 hours of continuing education. Commissioner Jilek noted that DOCJT provides 200 classes in a typical year, but during the COVID-19 pandemic the DOCJT has been able to provide eight hours of online in-service training to a maximum of 300 officers per week. Commissioner Jilek stated that DOCJT was attempting to obtain a waiver for the remaining 32 hours of in-service training, so that officers can still obtain their KLEFPF stipend.

In response to a question from Co-Chair Nemes, Commissioner Jilek agreed that better pay would attract better candidates. Commissioner Jilek continued by stating increased funding for training would also increase the quality of policing.

In response to a question from Chair West, Commissioner Jilek said that he had just received confirmation that the waiver for the KLEFPF in-service stipend had been approved. Commissioner Jilek noted that the Governor's office had been supportive and understanding of the need for the waiver from the beginning.

### **Impact of COVID-19 on the Department of Corrections**

Commissioner Cookie Crews and Deputy Commissioner Randy White provided an update on the Department of Corrections' (DOC) response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the implementation of safety protocols to protect both corrections officers and inmates.

In response to a question from Senator Schickel, Commissioner Crews confirmed that inmates are still receiving their mail. Commissioner Crews stated that 1,170 inmates had been released due to COVID-19 precautions.

There being no further business before the subcommittee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 AM.