



**CI ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Meeting Minutes Amended  
June 24, 2021 9AM – 11AM

Location: Virtual TEAMS

**PRESENT**

Committee Members: Terri Fortner, Suzanne Cook, Danny Carrao, Marilyn Kennedy, Jim Huffman, Mari Borrero, Bill Messenger, Rep. Dan Griffey, Rep. Strom Peterson, Senator Patty Kuderer

Guest: Jay Pershing – Weld Works

CI/DOC Staff: Secretary Strange, Sarah Sytsma, Sean Murphy, Danielle Armbruster, Jamie Dolan, Emily Hetland, Todd Cunnington, Scott Edwards, Adrea Stephens, Calvin Thorpe, Steve Petermann, Lindsey Konrad, Jennifer Renhard, Jeremy Barclay, Michael Steenhout, CI CMT Members

Meeting called to order at 9:02AM

**WELCOME**

CI Director Sarah Sytsma welcomed everyone to the meeting, conducted an official roll call and introduced DOC's newly appointed Secretary Cheryl Strange and Deputy Secretary Sean Murphy.

Secretary Strange addressed the group and shared how delighted she was to be a part of the meeting and is looking forward to learning more about the advisory committee and how we can become better partners as time moves forward. Secretary Strange then presented Deputy Secretary Sean Murphy who introduced himself to the group and expressed his interest in learning more about the committee.

Danielle offered a welcome to the group and stated how excited she was to have one of CI's former incarcerated individuals join us today. Jay is a program manager for Weld Seattle and is one of the major key players.

Sarah shared a brief introduction of Jay, highlighting his work with post incarcerated individuals.

Jay shared his history of struggling with drug addiction for 22 years which resulted in him becoming homeless. The first time he went to jail he spent 18 months. Jay then went back to prison in 2008 and was sentenced to 10 years, at that point something changed for him. In 2009 Jay began working as a CNC machinist in CI at Stafford Creek Corrections Center, completing his program 2013.

Upon release in 2014, Jay entered a sober living house and worked odd jobs for about two months until he landed a job as a CNC machinist at a manufacturing company. Within two years, he was managing the company of 50+ employees. Jay kept that job until he moved on to Weld Seattle which also serves as a recovery housing program.

Jay moved on to develop his own company named Weld Works which promotes clean and sober living and helps to provide jobs and resources to participants. The program offers housing, food, clothing, childcare, bus fare, and any other barriers that stand in the way of being successful.

In a little over two years 255 formerly incarcerated individuals have received paychecks, 61 percent have obtained permanent employment, and 74 were directly placed by Weld Works staff. Weld Works employs close to 35 people every day. The jobs consist of construction, industrial and food manufacturing, warehouse work, property maintenance, retail and many more.

This year Weld Works will be continuing to work and embark on the following:

- Launching program 1426 (A one stop shop for participants offering housing, employment, and legal services)
- Going through a major remodel of their office space
- Looking for a DOJ grant and partnering with DOC
- Flagging certification, solar panel project and OSHA 10-30

Sarah opened the floor up for questions.

Senator Kuderer asked Jay about what is offered in terms of housing; she also asked if there were any roadblocks that he has encountered. Jay explained that his company has a MOA with the Housing Connector Company, which offers lower move in costs and insurance, just in case renters can't afford to pay for a month.

Secretary Strange thanked Jay for sharing his incredible success story and mentioned that she is looking into programs that offer mentors/peers that can come directly into the facilities to work with individuals who are set to release soon.

Deputy Secretary Murphy asked Jay what is it that his company does to mentor newly released individuals. Jay explained that Weld Seattle and Weld Works are led by peers, and other than two admin staff their entire team has lived experience with incarceration, homelessness, and addiction. The Weld Works staff consists of a program director, program assistant, staffing coordinator, reentry navigator and a mentor. They also offer wraparound support, training/classes, tools, boots, and transportation. Weld Works human resource staff is dedicated to helping individuals with obtaining identification.

Danielle stated that she would like to formally recognize Amy King and the Square Peg partnership. She then asked Jay what CI can do to better partner with his company. Jay asked that we partner with him and allow them into the facilities to teach and offer programs that are transferable upon release. He'd also like to see rotation of jobs within CI so that individuals are more well-rounded.

## **BUSINESS MEETING**

### **Approval of 3/17/21 Meeting Minutes:**

Motion was made for approval and seconded. Minutes were approved as submitted.

### **CI Business Led Transformation (BLT) System Update**

Lindsey Konrad and Jen Renhard shared a slide show presentation and talked about the upgrade from the Microsoft Great Plains platform to D365. D365 is a cloud-based enterprise resource planning software that will make it much easier to process invoicing, inventory and tracking.

The project began two years ago, we are now at the point where we can integrate the software to the new system. In preparation of the upgrade the BLT group has held several workshops and conducted site visits. The BLT project team will be presenting all this information to the OCIO and they will oversee the process of the new upgrade. Operational changes will occur at CI facilities in addition to some changes to staff and incarcerated worker roles and responsibilities.

### **Organizational Readiness Assessment**

The organization readiness assessment has been implemented to help with change that comes with the new system upgrade to ensure that this process is successful. Currently we have 58 key stakeholders 4-5 stakeholder groups.

Moving forward:

- We will have quarterly engagement sessions to make sure that we are maintaining consistent communication
- Quarterly newsletter updates will be distributed to staff
- FAQ documents will be distributed as needed
- Will resume conducting onsite visits
- Process and impact analysis for CI and Incarcerated workers

### **Next Steps**

Obtain formal approval from DOC's Executive Leadership

Amended investment plan to OICO for approval; will occur within 45 days

Kick off date will be late August 2021

Conduct formal discovery sessions

Track measurable goals

### **Strategic Planning**

#### **Goal area 1- Increase employment engagement through meaningful and consistent communication**

- Leadership visibility
- Focus on employee development
- Commitment to communication

#### **Goal area 1 -Modernize Technology**

- Achieve D365 implementation
- Align technology with industry standards

### **Goal area 3 – Financial Health**

- Full cost recovery
- Embedded financial awareness

### **Goal area 4 – Workforce Development**

- Post release employment as part of a unified employment plan
- Ensuring CI worker are “work ready” upon release

### **What's Next?**

- Development of processes to support strategic plan (metrics, monitoring, reporting, etc.)
- Drafting final plan document and data dashboard
- Coordination of measure owners and resources
- Share update with CI Advisory Board at next meeting

### **10:17AM CALL FOR OPEN FORUM**

Committee member Suzanne Cook advised that there are only a few people who know about the advisory committee and would like to see more of a community presence at the meetings.

Danielle thanked Suzanne for her comments and said that we will look at other opportunities to communicate with our partners.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Beginning in September meeting recordings will be available via YouTube – all committee members agreed to the recording of the meetings. The link will be made available on DOC and CI’s website.

Suzanne Cook discussed the commissary and food package program in terms of making them more affordable to the customer and issues with using only one vendor. She also stated that the wages vs. cost are not equal. Jamie spoke to the issues that Suzanne mentioned regarding commissary and stated that we use Union Supply. There are several factors that are considered when using a specific vendor, such as it must pass security in the prisons. Jamie explained that we seek the best prices we can and are always trying to offer high quality items at the lowest costs. Jamie confirmed that we do listen to the feedback from the incarcerated population as they are our customer and offer at-cost items to the indigent population. CI attends tier rep meetings to ensure they are attentive to the feedback from the incarcerated population.

Senator Patty Kuderer stated that she would like to see more healthy options being offered to the population such as fresh fruits and vegetables. She also suggested that we should revisit the idea of going back to growing some of our own vegetables and getting some green space back into the facilities.

Sarah ended the meeting by taking a moment to thank Bill Messenger for his years of service on the Advisory Committee. Bill addressed the group and thanked CI for the work they are doing within the community and he is looking forward to retirement and time to relax.



**Action Items:**

- Marilyn Kennedy requested Jay Pershing's email address and to discuss the tool voucher program.
- Calvin Thorpe and Danny will connect to create a pipeline for the soon to be released incarcerated population, so that they have a chance to know about the new programs at Amazon.
- Jamie will continue to work on gathering feedback on how we can decrease the cost for the commissary items.
- Adrea will send out an updated Advisory Committee roster to reflect new changes within the committee.
- Adrea will send Bill's plaque to his home address once it is received.

**Conclusion of meeting.**

**Meeting adjourned at 11:01AM.**