



Advisory Board Meeting

March 25, 2025

Minutes

In Attendance

Board Members, Ex-Officios and/or Designees:

John Baldwin (IL), Seth Bogin (FBOP), Barbara Broderick (Vice Chair-AZ), Annette Chambers-Smith (OH), Jerome Galang (FJC), Kathy Hawk Sawyer (VA), Teresa May (TX), Gabe Morgan (Chair-VA), Ruby Qazilbash (BJA), Heather Tubman-Carbone (BJA), and Pat Tuthill (FL). Absent: Reggie Wilkinson, Claire Murray (USSC), and Kellie Blue (OJJDP).

NIC Staff:

Stephen Amos (NIC), Stewart Baumgartner (NIC), Robbye Braxton (NIC), Robert M. Brown, Jr., (NIC), Holly Busby (NIC), Sandora Cathcart (NIC), Cameron Coblentz (NIC), Sarah Davis (NIC), Harry Fenstermaker (NIC), Matthew Fox (NIC), Chad Garrett (NIC), Jeff Hadnot (NIC), Stephanie Hove (NIC), Mike Jackson (NIC), Kevin Jones (NIC), Elizabeth Kreger (NIC), Donna Ledbetter (NIC), Leslie LeMaster (DFO-NIC), Stefan LoBuglio (Director-NIC), Jorge Ortiz (NIC), Dena Owens (NIC), Val Perchina-Ward (NIC), Kendall Rhyne (NIC), Scott Richards (NIC), Tashima Ricks (NIC), Chris Romine (NIC), Ken Rose (NIC), Richard Schaefer (NIC), Cody Scott (NIC), Chris Smith (NIC), Richard Sparaco (NIC), P. Elizabeth Taylor (NIC), Ronald Taylor (NIC), Mike Ward (NIC), Glenn Watson (NIC), Archie Weatherspoon IV (NIC), Scott Weygandt (NIC), Jim Wiseman (NIC), and Mark Wyche (NIC).

Guests:

Robbye Veronica Cunningham (APPA), Robert Green (ACA), Carrie Hill (NSA), Elsie Judon (AJA), Shawn Laughlin (AJA), Megan Noland (MCSA), Phil Nunes (ICJA), Katie Penkoff (CJJA), Deborah Ross (NCCHC), Sarah Seipel (BOP), Michael Stewart (TN), Wendy Venvertloh (NAPSA), and Jeff Washington (ACA),

Tuesday, March 25, 2025

Meeting Opening and Instructions

Designated Federal Officer (DFO) Leslie LeMaster called the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) Advisory Board meeting to order at 2:01 PM ET. Ms. LeMaster welcomed board members, NIC staff, stakeholders, professional associations, and members of the public to the virtual

meeting. Additionally, she reviewed the requirements of the *Federal Advisory Committee Act*.¹, and gave instructions to board members, staff, and guests. She related that the meeting is being recorded for the public record. She then yielded the floor to the Advisory Board's Chair, Sheriff Gabriel Morgan.

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Morgan welcomed the Board, guests, and members of the public to this National Institute of Corrections (NIC) Advisory Board meeting. He welcomed NIC Director Stefan LoBuglio, Ed.D., and Seth Bogin, FBOP Chief of Staff, in addition to expressing his welcome and thanks to Board members, Ex Officios, association partner representatives, and NIC staff members in attendance. The Chair recognized Director LoBuglio, who gave his welcome to NIC's Board members and Ex Officio representatives and designees, federal partners, association representatives, and members of the general public in attendance.

Review and Approval of Meeting Agenda

Chair Morgan called on Board members to review the meeting agenda and asked for any changes. Hearing none, he called for a motion to accept the agenda as written. Board Member Pat Tuthill motioned for acceptance and was seconded by Board Member Annette Chambers-Smith. The Chair called a voice vote, and the agenda was accepted by unanimous voice vote.

Board Member Resignations

Chair Morgan recognized Director LoBuglio for an announcement of interest to the Board. He announced the resignations of Board members Todd Ishee and Cheryl Strange. He thanked them for their service to the field and for contributing their expertise and experience during their tenure on the NIC Advisory Board. He wished them well in their future endeavors. In addition, he overviewed the process of filling Board vacancies with the Attorney General's office, and related that NIC is actively working to fill them.

Approval of the January 2025 Meeting Minutes

Chair Morgan entertained a motion to accept the January 2025 meeting outcomes and minutes document. Member Chambers-Smith motioned to accept the outcomes from the January 2025 meeting as written, and Board Member Teresa May seconded the motion. The Chair called for a voice vote, and the minutes were unanimously accepted as written. The January 7 – 8, 2025, *NIC Advisory Board Minutes* are available at https://s3.amazonaws.com/static.nicic.gov/nicic.gov/files/media/document/NIC-ABMinutes_1-7-8-25_Approved.pdf.

Bylaws Committee Update

¹ The Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) Overview <https://www.gsa.gov/policy-regulations/policy/federal-advisory-committee-act-faca-management-overview>

Chair Morgan recognized Vice Chair Barbara Broderick to provide an update on the Board's Bylaws Development subcommittee's work to date and the status of reviews. The Vice Chair related that the final draft submitted to the Federal Bureau of Prisons' Office of General Counsel (FBOP-OGC) for final review included a clarified definition of "practitioner", to reflect "active practitioner" meaning currently employed in the corrections field. She also related that the timing of chair elections is detailed as occurring in March annually, to sync it with practice. In addition, she related that OGC's review timeline was adjusted. The Vice Chair recognized members Baldwin and May for their collaborative work on the subcommittee, thanked the Board at large for their review and feedback, and recognized DFO LeMaster for her support in the subcommittee's work process. She advised that the Board expects the final OGC review to be completed before the scheduled July meeting, allowing the Board to vote on final bylaws adoption at that time.

50th Anniversary Activity Update

Chair Morgan recognized NIC Senior Deputy Director Robert M. Brown, Jr., for an update on planned NIC 50th anniversary activities. Senior Deputy Director (SDD) Brown related that plans have been impacted by budget issues. NIC hopes the budget situation will improve and support in-person and/or virtual activities. He emphasized that NIC recognizes the importance of celebrating 50 years of NIC's impact on the nation's corrections arena, and related that efforts are ongoing. Chair Morgan commented that he does trust that funding can be secured for an in-person event, as a virtual celebration would diminish the impact of NIC over its 50 years of historical service to local, state, and federal corrections. Chair Morgan thanked SDD Brown for his update.

NIC Director's Update

Chair Morgan recognized Director LoBuglio for his update. Director LoBuglio echoed SDD Brown's comments on NIC's strong and proud 50-year history that is worthy of celebration. Director LoBuglio related that NIC is participating in the transition process with FBOP and explaining NIC's mission to the new administration. He stated that it continues its planning efforts to meet the needs of the field and the priorities of the administration.

Director LoBuglio complimented DFO LeMaster on the comprehensive January 2025 meeting minutes, that captured the great discussions had, including surfaced topics that the field has interest in, such as a) performance metrics, b) artificial intelligence (AI) and technology, c) staffing, including recruitment, retention, and training, and d) re-entry broadly and re-entry in institutional settings, in transitional settings and community corrections. He related that these surfaced topics are fodder for future meetings' focus.

Director LoBuglio shared that the Chair and Vice Chair requested the March meeting to focus on how NIC's current operations and future planning have been affected by the new administration's priorities and recent presidential Executive Orders.

Director LoBuglio stated that it is a time of significant change. He related 1) many leadership changes in agencies across the federal government, including current vacancies of the Director and Deputy Director of the FBOP; 2) approximately 50% of FBOP's executive leadership have retired as of early March, 2025; 3) new executive orders (EOs), e.g. presidential actions that impact NIC and which NIC is in full compliance; 4) the Return-to the In-Person Office EO² requiring all NIC staff, regardless of geographic location, to report to an office 5 days a week; 5) that this EO necessitated securing office locations for 25% of NIC's staff complement, as NIC staff are located in a multiplicity of locations across the country; 6) that as of this date, the full staff complement is reporting to an office locations as required by the EO; 7) that teleworking is reserved for rare events such as climate, emergency and inclement weather issues; 8) that we have worked tirelessly with the FBOP, and partner state, local and federal corrections and justice space agencies, such as the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the United States Marshalls Service (USMS) to secure offices for NIC's remote hired NIC team members. He emphasized that NIC leads with our staff, and the highest priority has been to ensure that all have quality office space to conduct their work.

Director LoBuglio next described a second EO impacting NIC³. This and other executive orders led NIC to a comprehensive review of public website resources, published materials, training programs, ecourses, and cooperative agreements, demonstrating full faith and compliance with executive order requirements.

Director LoBuglio further related that 1) NIC's Washington, DC office is moving from the current 901 D Street location to the FBOP 400 First Street NW building; 2) NIC offices will be located on the third and fifth floors; 3) the agency is exploring additional cost efficiencies including more virtual service delivery; 4) NIC will be offering more field and regional based training programs; 5) the agency is bolstering the public website; 6) the agency is enhancing the NIC Learn Center, e.g. NIC's learning management system; 7) the agency will be offering more ecourses, available 24/7; 8) NIC will be fulfilling more technical assistance requests through NIC staff direct service to requesting agencies; 9) NIC staff are imminently skilled with distinguished experience in corrections to provide direct service; 10) NIC will move away for the current reliance on external technical resource providers (TRPs) to provide technical assistance services; 11) NIC has demonstrated how its founding legislation⁴, directly supports all NIC services and programs; 12) similar to (11) that NIC's staffing and table of organization reflect its statutory mandate; and 13) NIC continues to serve as the only federal agency with a legislative mandate to provide specialized corrections services on a national scale, and plays an indispensable role in shaping practices that protect citizens and uphold justice.

Director LoBuglio briefed the Board on conversations with the Deputy Attorney General's Office. He related 1) his honor and pleasure to introduce NIC and its unique mission amongst federal

² Return to In Person Work <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/return-to-in-person-work/>

³ Defending Women from Gender Ideology and Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/defending-women-from-gender-ideology-extremism-and-restoring-biological-truth-to-the-federal-government/>

⁴ Chapter 319, The National Institute of Corrections <https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title18/part3&edition=prelim>

agencies and our founding legislative mandate to them; 2) that he shared that NIC is the sole federal agency to provide direct training and services to state and local correctional agencies; 3) that these are ongoing conversations; 4) that the agency continues to discern administration priorities; 5) that the administration is focusing on issues familiar to correctional and justice space agencies - public safety, addressing gangs, opioid and fentanyl interdiction, and cartels; 6) that immigration enforcement is a priority; 7) that victims' rights are a priority, and working with federal partners such as the Office of Victims of Crime (OVC) to ensure victims are honored and respected is expected; 8) that critical incident responses are a priority, including challenges in jails and prisons, major events, deaths in custody, and facility issues; and 9) that NIC has historically responded and will continue to respond to critical incidents.

Director LoBuglio stated that 1) the administration views re-entry and specifically the First Step Act⁵ (FSA) implementation as a priority; 2) NIC is providing assistance and training to the FBOP with their continuing implementation of FSA requirements; 3) the FSA supports reentry and recidivism reduction; 4) NIC is prepared to meet and exceed these priorities; 5) NIC's portfolio attests our support of these priorities for decades; 5) service delivery metrics in this meeting's Briefing Book support our current work across the country; 6) over 12,000 ecourses completions were recorded since January 1, 2025; 7) trainings in multiple states have been delivered in the same period; 8) new TA requests from a variety of states have been received in the same period; and 9) NIC recorded 71,000+ unique visitors to the public website in the same period.

Director LoBuglio highlighted 1) the newly initiated weekly Board email detailing NIC's Services to U.S. Corrections; 2) the weekly emails demonstrate NIC's weekly services and activities; 3) that NIC staff are in the field delivering service; 4) that NIC is continuing cost efficiency conversations while delivering service; 5) the agency is always seeking heightened visibility and presence; 6) that the care and feeding of agency social media and our public website are priorities; 7) that our revamped website is scheduled to launch in late May 2025; 8) that the agency is working to enhance our data analytics gathering and analysis processes to measure reach and service impact; 9) continued technology enhancements to service, spotlighting NIC's online System for Technical Assistance Requests (STAR); 10) continued work on staff onboarding processes; 11) a pending restructure proposal to create a Mission Support division, to support NIC's infrastructure; 12) recent conference participation at the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA), American Correctional Association (ACA), Correctional Leaders Association (CLA), American Probation and Parole Association (APPA) conferences; 13) recent participation in state Sheriff's association conferences in Texas, South Carolina, and Wisconsin; 14) that NIC is listening and hearing what the field's needs are; and 15) that NIC values its collaborative relationships with federal partner agencies including Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), the Office of Victims of Crime (OVC) and the Office of Justice Programs (OJP).

Director LoBuglio further related 1) his meetings with each Advisory Board member as of this date; 2) his meetings with association representatives and each NIC staff member; 3) his efforts to continue information gathering; 3) efforts to ensure NIC's services are shaped by the field's needs; 4) ensuring program and service alignment with NIC's statutory mandates and

⁵ The First Step Act <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/756/text>

requirements; 5) collaborative efforts to align NIC's services with the needs of the field, the new administration, and its priorities; and 6) keeping abreast of the latest occurrences impacting the field of corrections.

Director LoBuglio teased three upcoming new initiative proposals during this meeting - Correctional Intelligence Units, Uniform Federal Detention Standards and Inspections, and the Model Residential Re-entry Centers.

Budget Update

Director LoBuglio's final status update focused on NIC's budget status. He related that 1) the budget is a top priority of his; 2) the budget situation is very challenging across the federal government, and not unique to NIC or FBOP; 3) he distinguishes the NIC budget between a) the programmatic budget, including infrastructure items to support programmatic services (NIC's LMS, ecourse development, website and Information Center contract, the STAR system, participant travel, etc.), and b) the staffing budget, supporting the NIC staff complement which is borne by FBOP, and c) the total budget of NIC, which includes items a and b. He explained that FBOP has fully supported the NIC staffing budget and that the programmatic budget has been buffeted by the use of Continuing Resolutions to fund the federal government.

Director LoBuglio stated NIC's budget request for FY2025 was \$12.4 million, which was the FY2024 final budget received. The Director related that 1) to date, NIC has received a little over \$3 million due to continuing resolution (CR) impacts; 2) a current budget request for \$9.3 million that is in negotiation; 3) this is a highly irregular budget season with successive CRs in December, 2024, March 2025, and the just passed full year continuing resolution law⁶; 4) this impacts NIC short and long range service planning and delivery; 5) NIC and FBOP are working with one month budget apportionments; 6) negotiations continue for funding for the balance of the fiscal year; 7) information center, library, and website resources are prioritized as contracted services; 8) NIC prioritized cooperative agreement awards for work continuations and completions; 9) hard decisions were made to postpone several training programs due to CR requirements; 10) NIC is analyzing April and May planned services to leverage funding for innovative service delivery despite CRs; 11) NIC is surmounting these barriers and are present in the field; 12) weekly Board emails demonstrate this; and 13) by listening to the field, grounding ourselves in our statutory mandates, and aligning ourselves with new administration priorities we are overcoming these challenges. Director LoBuglio concluded his update by expressing his gratitude and thanks to the Board for their continued guidance, to NIC's supporters, to our federal agency partners, our partner associations, and NIC's team. He yielded the floor to Chair Morgan.

Chair Morgan paused and opened the floor to entertain questions relative to the Director's update. Hearing none, Chair Morgan inquired as to what the annual budget request process looks like as it is initialized. He further inquired that the Director stated \$9.3 million is a programmatic

⁶ H.R.1968 - Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025, March 15, 2025, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/1968/text>

request, which would be a total budget of \$12.4 million for the year. The Chair requested a breakdown of the process going forward. Director LoBuglio answered that a partial-year funding request was submitted on March 3, while under the CR. As of March 15, we are under a full year CR. NIC submitted six categories of programs and priorities in the March 3 request. Going forward in the next 30 days, FBOP and NIC should gain greater certainty with regard to the budget. Director LoBuglio stated he will have further conversations with FBOP finance and leadership staff to ascertain what NIC will receive from FBOP.

Chair Morgan stated that, as he looks at the FBOP overall budget and at NIC's budget, there has been little change to NIC's budget, even adjusted for inflation over the years. It has been static with no increase for years. The Chair asked the Director how NIC can position itself within FBOP to request and demonstrate the need for more funding. Director LoBuglio replied that we need to keep NIC strong, visible, and demonstrating its criticality to US corrections at the state, local, and federal levels. We do this by assisting FBOP directly as our parent agency. As an FBOP executive team member, he related that he is privy to budget challenge discussions, an issue shared by almost every agency in the country. He further related that NIC must maintain programming integrity, scrutinize cost structures, ensure all expenditures and travel are essential, and maximize integrity in our service delivery to the field. Chair Morgan replied that he would like a more definitive and increasing budget for NIC and encouraged the Director to seek greater funding.

Advisory Board Round Table: New Initiative Proposals

Chair Morgan asked Director LoBuglio to continue with the next agenda item, to discuss three new projects that NIC is exploring. Director LoBuglio related that NIC is always looking to the future and wants to hear from the Board on recently surfaced new initiative ideas to meet the emerging needs of the field. These proposals align with the new administration's priorities of enhancing intelligence, uniformity in standards and inspections, and supporting re-entry in communities, related to the First Step Act. Foremost, he expressed that NIC wants to hear the Board's ideas, concerns, suggestions, and recommendations on these proposals. There is detailed information on each proposal in the briefing book, including its goals and objectives.

Proposal One: Correctional Intelligence Units (CIUs)

Director LoBuglio called on Chief Ronald Taylor of NIC's Prisons Division for the first briefing on Correctional Intelligence Units (CIUs). Chief Taylor shared that 1) he reserved the right to call on fellow Chiefs during his briefing; 2) Correctional Intelligence Units or CIUs have proven effective in combating threats within correctional facilities and in broader communities; 3) they are currently in operation in numerous jails; 4) he will recognize Chief Stephen Amos of NIC's Jails Division at a point to share several jail examples where they are currently operational; 5) CIUs are also operational in community corrections, state departments of corrections, and the FBOP; 6) these units are designed to gather, analyze and disseminate intelligence information that are related to threats within the correctional facilities and agencies, such as gang activity, contraband smuggling, radicalization and violence; 7) they actively work to disrupt and prevent criminal enterprises that operate both inside and outside facilities walls in communities; 8) CIUs

collaborate with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies to share intelligence on the security threats; 9) a number of these communities have fusion centers⁷ to enhance their intelligence sharing across jurisdictions; 10) they work closely with local, state, and federal partners in law enforcement and federal agencies such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), the US Marshal Services (USMS) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS); 11) upon unpacking traditional functions of a CIU, we recognize that many agencies have some way of identifying and monitoring communication between and among inmates, and monitoring phone calls and emails to assess security threats; 12) intelligence gathered, such as gang identification, affiliation and activities or things are readily shared with within these units; 13) CIUs critically support contraband detection and mitigation, including such items as drugs, weapons and cell phones; 14) enhanced CIU focus areas are cyber intelligence and digital forensics, to monitor, detect, decrypt corrupted devices and how they are used; and 15) analyzing patterns of violence, escapes, incidents and other operational security risks greatly enhances strategic identification and disruptions.

Chief Taylor continued, 1) that our goal at the institute is to enhance our support of the field through training, technical assistance, and other services; 2) that hearing the field's needs directly is crucial to achieving this goal; 3) that NIC is striving to better understand and act upon essential challenges faced by corrections agencies across the country; 4) that specific to CIU's, what are the obstacles and barriers to establishing, and/or and enhancing these units?; 5) what are the identified gaps in a) intelligence gathering and sharing, b) technology, c) staffing, d) inter and intra agency collaboration, e) developing strategies and tools to assist agencies, and f) identifying legal and policy barriers to establishing and implementing CIU's; 5) that affect those intelligence unit operations.

Chief Taylor elaborated 1) we will begin work on this initiative by conducting listening sessions to gather information from the field; 2) sessions allow key challenges collection; 3) the goal is to help agencies improve intelligence gathering capabilities; 4) the aim is to enhance agencies collaboration and information sharing; 5) NIC's role is to collect, analyze and provide best practices in contraband disruption in the greater CIU space; 6) that this will support agencies ability and capacity to identify problems inside and outside institutions and the communities in which they exist; 7) this supports criminal enterprise disruption in facilities and communities; 8) this strategically leverages enhanced safety for correctional staff and the public; 9) that virtual listening sessions be utilize surface intelligence issues, barriers, and gaps; 10) that several larger agencies run CIUs at a high level; 11) the Florida Department of Corrections (FDC) uses an advanced gang intelligence program to track and disrupt gang activities inside and out of their outside of their prisons, using artificial intelligence (AI) to assist the monitoring process; 12) that the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) has a robust specialized services unit that focusing on gangs, addiction, major crimes, intelligence operations, leveraging digital forensics within their operations to improve their units; 13) that the Texas Department of Criminal Justices' (TDCJ) security threat group management unit monitoring 12,000+ gang members, and closely collaborates with law enforcement partners throughout the state and local

⁷Fusion Centers and Intelligence Sharing <https://bja.ojp.gov/program/it/national-initiatives/fusion-centers>

communities; 14) the FBOP utilizes their national security threat intelligence unit to coordinate and share intelligence across the federal prison system, with a specific emphasis on counter terrorism efforts.; and 15) that NIC's goal is to enhance the sharing of such intelligence within agencies and across the country with those who have the right and need to know. Chief Taylor paused for questions on this initiative proposal.

Chair Morgan asked if, while developing the curriculum and/or considering training, there could be consideration for jails, which currently use the proceeds from telephone commissions to sustain their ability to monitor, track, and put security overlays over communication, in light of the current Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ruling. The Chair continued how can we encourage jails to continue to do this, and /or how do we direct some federal funding to help with the development and/or deployment of security overlays to fulfill that mission? This will be very important for small, medium-sized, and rural agencies and facilities that may not be able to replace that funding. Larger agencies most likely will be able to support this and secure funding. Chief Taylor replied that the FCC ruling severely impacts traditional funding accrued through commissaries or telephones, and that states and localities will encounter hardship in acquiring this funding. He continued rhetorically how do they ensure and maintain a level of intelligence gathering operations while these limitations are in place? We must probe for this in listening sessions. Chief Taylor invited Chief Stephen Amos to share jail CIU examples. Chief Taylor yielded the floor to Chief Amos.

Chief Amos thanked Chief Taylor and echoed the point well made by Chair Morgan on small, rural, and medium-sized agencies on funding impacts as a result of the FCC ruling. He stated that 1) in smaller jails, one person holds multiple responsibilities, just one being intelligence gathering; 2) contrasted with larger jails, which have secured sophisticated and alternative funding strategies for CIUs; 3) that a) Tarrant County, Texas, b) Collin County, Texas, c) Los Angeles County, California, d) Sacramento County, California, e) Suffolk County, Virginia, and f) Harris County, Texas amongst many others are linked to fusion centers where intelligence is shared; 4) partnerships with the FBOP and the Federal Bureau of Investigations' (FBI) Corrections Task Force has just been instrumental in addressing the cartel issues, tracking trafficking gangs, and organized crime; and 5) this is a very significant opportunity, but a challenging one to fund for many small jurisdictions. Chief Amos yielded the floor. Director LoBuglio shared that Chief Amos convened a meeting in 2021 at the FBI's Training Academy in Quantico, Virginia, on just this issue, so this is work NIC has previously been engaged in.

Chair Morgan commented that at one time, the FBI made jail intelligence and corrections intelligence a regional issue, through a regional co-op approach, to leverage agencies talking and sharing intelligence information across traditional boundaries. He continued that he recommended that the FBI be included in this build-out, to ensure they can assist collaboratively with a regional and national push to the field. Chief Amos thanked the Chair. The Chair recognized Chief Robbye Braxton of NIC's Community Services Division (CSD). She added that the CIU initiative is an all-division effort, and the core team will be comprised of representatives from each of NIC's programmatic divisions. She related that in the past, community supervision agencies were a part of task forces. This is NIC's opportunity to document how those agencies are functioning in this type of unit.

Member Chambers-Smith asked if NIC would include and approach the current FCC commission, as they have several new members. The fear in corrections is that new communication rules are going to negatively impact intelligence gathering and other safety aspects in communications. She recommends that NIC takes it proper place in approaching the FCC to weigh in on how critical correctional intelligence is to local, state and federal agencies, including why and how its shared, how it enhances and creates safety inside institutions and in the communities in which they exist, along with fears that the FCC definition of services to be provided by phone companies would damage this critical aspect. She further related that the FCC defined what they believe are appropriate security and safety measures and left out many aspects pertinent to correctional intelligence gathering for prisons and public safety. She suggested that if NIC enters this space, it is a timely issue where NIC could “throw their back” into getting this changed, as it's not just small jurisdictions that are going to have financial troubles. It is the entirety of corrections, as phone companies are reporting the calls that we traditionally use for intelligence gathering. This is occurring in state, federal, and local agencies. She asked rhetorically, “Without this type of intelligence, what do we do to gather it? Rely on opening mail as our source?” She emphasized that this stance from the FCC is a tremendous step backward, as the foundation of intelligence gathered is often detected and identified in prison and jail phone calls. Now, due to the new FCC rules, these are not permissible items for companies to take on as an expense. She concluded that the field must figure out how to purchase and store this intelligence ourselves. There is no answer now. This is a time-sensitive concern, and she strongly recommends that this as a critical building block in this initiative. The Director and Division chiefs indicated their agreement with her statements

Member Teresa May related that she believed that many jails use tablets, also used in correctional facilities, parceled out as TDCJ does. Member Chambers-Smith related that as she understands it, there are certain services like recording and storing phone calls that the FCC would not consider to be a legitimate expense that should be borne by the company, or by payments from the families and the incarcerated themselves. The FCC did not state in the rule how these expenses are to be supported. Each company is going about it in different ways, which is a significant situation that has not been resolved. Member May agreed and stated that we or someone must approach the current administration if families or the incarcerated are required to bear this expense. Member Chambers-Smith related that there is a pending lawsuit where several attorneys general are attempting to stop this, as the FCC’s rule narrowly defines what can be paid for with the proceeds. The FCC, in her opinion, defined safety without or security without really defining it properly in a correctional context. Member May inquired as to when this questionable rule was issued. Chair Morgan shared that it was in 2024, and it became effective in January 2025, incrementally taking effect depending on the size of the organization. He further related that tablets are used for video visitation and calls and are regulated by the FCC, and that agencies have ways of monitoring usage. He expounded that the new rule impacts corrections across the board. He shared, from the industry and association standpoint, we are attacking this on a three-pronged approach, by talking to the administration, going back to the FCC, and going to court. There is a strong push to reverse, or at the least, modify it, to consider security and safety. We shall see what happens. Chair Morgan concluded it is all hands-on deck right now, but it is a reality that this may go away, and we'll be faced with the aftermath. Member Chambers-

Smith added that the Chair is referring to the *Martha Wright-Reed Just and Reasonable Communications Act of 2022*⁸, updated in 2024. She agrees with the Chair, there is a full court press now on this to get it adjusted. She strongly feels NIC has a strong place in pointing this out as a fellow federal agency to the FCC. The Chair agreed and thanked Member Chambers-Smith for sharing the pertinent act for the betterment of the Board.

Proposal Two: Model Residential Re-entry Centers

The Chair yielded the floor to Director LoBuglio to introduce the next new initiative proposal. He recognized Chief Braxton of NIC's CSD to give a summary of the second proposal on Model Residential Re-entry Centers. Chief Braxton related that 1) the proposal, as detailed in the briefing book, seeks to reimagine what a re-entry center looks like, is like, its aims, goals, functions, etc.; 2) currently, halfway houses or re-entry centers are one-size-fits-all; 3) NIC is asking the question "What if re-entry centers served specialized populations differently." 4) is it possible to create a re-entry center for low- or medium-risk offenders versus high-risk offenders, and what are the differences? 5) the overarching goal is to improve re-entry outcomes and enhance public safety; 6) offenders are leaving prison systems, and many enter halfway houses and/or re-entry centers; 7) the questions of how do we use them effectively, and are we currently using them most effectively? led to this proposal; 8) that we believe no one is currently exploring these questions; 9) we propose taking this body of work on in the CSD portfolio, through a team of NPAs, our social science researchers, and others ad hoc; 10) the driving research questions include a) what works?, b) how do we make it work better, so that that the system functions better?; and c) what a model frameworks for these centers?; 11) the goal is to identify best practices for model residential reentry centers or halfway houses; 12) a lasting set of tools and resources for federal and the state systems be developed; 13) the proposed approach is convene first an informal virtual sharing session, including state, local and FBOP reentry center representatives; 14) the goal from the first informal sharing session is to surface and identify challenges, what works, and what does not work currently; 15) we propose including several people with lived experience to share their experiences in these reentry settings and systems; 16) the efforts will be led by NPA Kendall Rhyne of CSD; 17) proposed initial efforts include visiting a sample of rural, urban, small, and large existing centers; 18) the goals of the initiative will be iterative over time as the work proceeds based upon findings; 19) we propose this initiative as we do know there are issues with halfway houses and those exiting them; 20) we can further explore these issues by compiling information and data on existing ones; 21) the planned overarching goals with our research team to build a model of what works, rather than the current "one-size-fits-all" approach; 22) this initiative will be grounded in best practices in case management and risk classification; and 23) this is will be a new research and practice area of benefit to the field. Chief Braxton recognized NPA Rhyne for his additional comments.

NPA Rhyne added that 1) this initiative's work will involve with the Interstate Compact⁹ team; 2) we recognize that there may be other places and things beyond half-way houses and residential

⁸ Martha Wright-Reed Just and Reasonable Communications Act of 2022 <https://www.fcc.gov/congress-enacts-martha-wright-reed-just-and-reasonable-communications-act-2022-updated-link>

⁹ Interstate Commission for Adult Offender Supervision <https://interstatecompact.org/about>

reentry centers within each community that provide good family support; 3) we will be very intentional regarding using “thriving” metrics for what they are doing well, as well as what supports intentional fidelity of practice; 4) we will identify and address poor outcomes; 5) this is an exploratory initiative; 6) we do have the ability to place people who have earned it based upon risk in differing types of settings, as opposed to traditional half-way house settings; and 7) this opens up spaces for higher risk level people, increasing capacity.

Member Tuthill commented that she has very strong opinions about halfway houses. She related that her daughter, Peyton, was murdered by someone sent from Maryland to Denver, Colorado, into a half-way house. As a result, she has spent 25 years analyzing them. She continued that she believes we can all agree that they are not equal, and that they differ in programming, structure, safety issues, and those that are not safe and do not consider public safety within their programming, what they do, and how they function. She continued that she served for 18 years as the ex-officio victims’ member on the interstate compact and currently serves as a victims’ representative on the Florida State Compact Council. She has been a very vocal opponent of the interstate compact and moving offenders across state lines to enter a halfway house. In most cases, she explained, those services can be provided within the state where they reside, with some exceptions, such as mobile military families, for example, and other extenuating circumstances. However, she related, what occurs in so many of the halfway houses across the country is that someone leaves the halfway house, and they violate some of the rules and regulations of the halfway house, and public safety is significantly jeopardized. She recognizes this can vary from state to state, depending on the quality of supervision and the tracking. She shared that as NIC engages on the policy issue of reentry residential centers, it should identify and highlight those that are high performing both in terms of the successes of their clients and in the accountability that they provide for the community.

Chief Braxton responded that she appreciated Member Tuthill expressing her concerns and sharing Peyton’s story. She related that NIC must include victims’ voices at the table, as this is a critical perspective to this work, and to knowing what works and does not in terms of public safety.

Vice Chair Broderick stated that the initiative is well thought out as described and can address a multitude of problems. For example, in the Vice Chair’s state of Arizona, local halfway houses are not monitored by anyone. She related that anyone could create a 501 (c) (3)¹⁰ organization and open for business, and that they operate very differently, and some are poorly performing. She agreed the NIC could play a valuable role to support consistency, and high standards. She concluded that she commends the initiative, as there is a wide variety of business practices in this vast arena.

Chair Morgan stated that he’ll take Board members’ comments first, and if time remains, other comments. The Chair recognized Member John Baldwin. Member Baldwin emphasized that when looking at data, he recommends analyzing 5 – 10 years of metrics, rather than 2 – 3 years, as the

¹⁰ Exempt purposes - Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3)<https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/charitable-organizations/exempt-purposes-internal-revenue-code-section-501c3>

data picture tends to change dramatically, and that it would be beneficial to observe trends over a longer period. Chief Braxton thanked Member Baldwin for his counsel and shared that NIC's research analysts are crucial to this metrics framing. The Chair recognized Member Chambers-Smith.

Member Chambers-Smith shared that in Ohio, reentry residential centers are required to seek American Correctional Association (ACA) accreditation as one means to ensure that halfway houses function to the expected level. They are all different yet comply with these standards, and they compile and report various data. She cautioned that getting halfway houses insured, based upon the risk levels of differentiated clientele, is a recognized issue. She advised based on Ohio's experience, to advocate for these community correctional facilities to house higher-level risk populations, and that populations with lower risk needs can be placed elsewhere. She added that insurance for these centers is a barrier, and that Ohio's network of halfway house/reentry centers has had difficulty obtaining insurance for high-risk clients.

Chair Morgan recognized Phil Nunes, President of the International Community Justice Association (ICJA), whose membership includes community-based agencies that work with the criminal justice population on housing, workforce, and behavioral health issues. In addition, many ICJA member agencies have Regional Reentry Center (RRC) contracts with the FBOP. He stated that he supports the risk level approach in the initiative, and that residential reentry centers should be reserved for higher risk people, and that lower risk people should be on electronic monitoring and other lower risk/need options. He related further that residential reentry space, as research dictates, is for people who have higher needs. While assessing risk sounds scary to people, he added that risk assessments are predicated on the needs of the person. Nunes shared that FBOP is developing updated RCC statements of work (SOW). He offered to share with Chief Braxton ICJA national survey results for detailed improvements to the SOW, specifically improvements to programming, as current RRC SOWs are focused on life safety. He echoed Member Chambers-Smith's comments on standards, as his Ohio-based reentry program boasts evidence-based and research-based standards. Nunes concluded by acknowledging Member Tuthill's personal victim experience and his support for a victim perspective in the initiative. Chief Braxton concluded by thanking him for the offer and related that the CSD team's goal is to develop standards and practices that must be in place which support information-driven agency funding decisions.

Chair Morgan stated that as an additional consideration, Chief Braxton should discern if any sheriffs are administering halfway houses, as local sheriffs have a great understanding of the employment and social service supports in communities that would be helpful to manage the reentry process.

Chair Morgan recognized Member May. She echoed Member Tuthill's concerns and supports her statements. In Houston, she has witnessed residents of poorly regulated and operating halfway houses victimizing community members. She affirmed Vice-Chair Broderick's statement that the halfway houses are difficult to regulate. She further stated that every level of government struggles with this, and that it is absolutely critical to have victims' voices in this initiative. She related that innocent people have been victimized, many times with no appropriate monitoring,

and that some who enter a halfway house become victims inside. There are clients with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), serious and complex mental illness, and health and human services expertise is needed. She continued that finding appropriate places for individuals with IDD, for one, is nearly impossible, and coupled with serious mental illness, it is impossible. She concluded that we cannot forget the victims and families who have lost loved ones, as halfway houses exist within communities.

Member Tuthill thanked Vice Chair Broderick and Member May. She related that many halfway houses are not licensed, and that cities have no requirement for them to be. This initiative can and needs to address that, she added. Her daughter Peyton's murderer had assaulted a counselor and a resident before fleeing. She concluded that there are many issues to analyze and examine, and it is something that NIC should take on. Director LoBuglio thanked Member Tuthill for her counsel and personal insights.

Proposal Three: Unified Federal Detention Inspection Standards

Director LoBuglio recognized Chief Stephen Amos of NIC's Jails Division to give a synopsis of the third proposal, to develop uniform inspection standards with regard to federal detention of immigration cases. Chief Amos thanked the Chair and Director and appreciated the opportunity to gain the Board's counsel and guidance on the initiative proposal. Chief Amos related that 1) the nation's jail are burdened by multiple overlapping inspections from federal agencies, including ICE, FBOP, USMS, in addition to state mandated inspections; 2) these inspection standards overlap; 3) they strain resources and divert valuable time from critical law enforcement functions, ultimately impacting public safety; 4) recent discussions with Border Czar Tom Holman at the National Sheriff's Association (NSA) conference was the unique opportunity to look at aligning these federal standards and inspections into a unified process; 5) streamlining and alleviating overlapping inspection burdens is advantageous; 6) a single, unified, annual inspection incorporating standardized detention standards applicable to all federal detainee populations, would a) promote consistency, b) reduce costs for government and taxpayers, c) eliminate conflicting inspection results, and ultimately d) benefit sheriff's departments, corrections and federal agencies; 7) the proposal is to convene a working group comprised of federal partners at the direction of the Office of the Deputy Attorney General (ODAG), and the National Institute of Corrections; 8) invitees include representatives of ICE, FBOP, USMS, NSA, Major County Sheriffs of America (MCSA), Small and Rural Law Enforcement Executives Association (SRLEEA), the National Association of Counties (NACo), the American Jail Association (AJA), and ACA; 9) convenes a facilitated discussion to identify specific challenges associated with the current multiple inspection system and exploring opportunities for aligning federal detention standards and inspection processes; 10) discerning the current inspection frequency and its impact on jail operations; 11) variants in existing federal detention standards and their practical implications; 12) potential technological solutions for streamlining inspection data and reporting; 13) the feasibility of a single, standardized inspection checklist; 14) identifying any legal and policy barriers to consolidating inspections; 15) determining methodologies for coordinating inspections within and across multiple agencies; 16) projecting a single, annual, coordinated and consolidated inspections impact on the nation's jails; and 17) initiative goals include a) which agencies should be the lead for single inspections?; b) What training would be needed for

inspectors to conduct a consolidated inspection process?, and c) How to manage and handle conflicting standards between agencies? Chief Amos continued that this working group, convened, would foster collaborative communication between federal partners and stakeholders, focused on these inspection challenges. He continued that NIC is poised as the appropriate convening body to hear from all parties and discern how these processes can be streamlined to reduce redundancies and burdens, and that supports the nation's jails.

Chair Morgan commented that he is sure multiple sheriff's offices would welcome this, as when you hold federal prisoners and ICE detainees, differing standards apply, in addition to all state and local standards. Chief Amos responded that the nation's sheriffs robustly discussed this with Border Czar Holman. He further related that he believes it is NIC's role to convene the workgroup to explore the viability of such efforts, even if the result is not complete unification, as it will result in more streamlined and cost-effective inspections and better meet the needs of federal partners and the local stakeholders. Director LoBuglio commented that the FBOP's Program Review division is currently auditing the application of ICE standards to those ICE cases held in FBOP custody. He added that this proposal can benefit from some of the experiences of FBOP and can benefit local, state, and federal correctional agencies.

Chair Morgan asked for the Board's reactions to the three proposals, and any recommendations and counsel. Vice Chair Broderick stated that the three proposals are timely, and specifically that the COI proposal involves all NIC divisions. She continued that Member Chambers-Smith's comments on the FCC are critical, and that NIC follow up with the FCC. As for the model residential reentry centers proposal, NIC should not miss the opportunity to further move into this space. The Vice Chair gave big kudos to the third proposal. She indicated that NIC is the agency to assist small, rural jails as well as large urban jails in developing a standardized and unified standards and inspection process. She concluded that all three proposals are worthy and critical at this pivotal moment.

Chair Morgan asked for association representative comments on the three proposals.

The Chair recognized Shawn Laughlin, President of AJA. He stated that all are noble proposals, and there may be overlaps. He continued that 1) the FCC references in the CIU proposal are critical; 2) that there is much to digest on it; 3) he supports the collaborative approach; 4) that AJA and others are already engaged in addressing some of these initiatives and would welcome NIC; 5) the association is looking forward to helping in any way, particularly to bring professionals and practitioners into discussions; 6) the overarching view that NIC can play an impactful role; and 7) he and AJA are appreciative to the Board and NIC for their continued efforts on behalf of the nation's jails. Chair Morgan thanked him for his comments and offer of support and echoed that including associations in these proposal rollouts by NIC is important.

Chair Morgan recognized Deborah Ross, representing the National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC). She related that 1) NCCHC is an accreditation body working in the correctional health care space; 2) NCCHC is happy to help these efforts; 3) NCCHC is a longtime NIC supporter; 4) NCCHC is also working in the reentry space; 5) NCCHC would be happy to work

on any reentry initiative through the lens of corrections health services; and 6) that these proposals are lofty and worthy work to pursue.

Chair Morgan recognized Megan Noland, representing Major County Sheriffs of America (MCSA). She stated that 1) she is putting her exclamation point on what has been said; 2) MCSA truly appreciates these new initiatives; 3) MSCA is relaunching its Intelligence Commanders Committee; 4) MSCA is available as a resource for products, support and assistance; 5) the streamlining of inspection process, and anything that can be done to ease that burden is crucial; 6) budget shortfalls continue; and 7) that budget reductions also continue at the state and local levels.

Chair Morgan recognized Rob Greene, Executive Director of ACA. He related that 1) he wishes NIC the best on the proposals and their goals and that he and ACA are happy to help; 2) that he strongly encourages NIC to not lose sight that any set of standards were developed by people that worked in the field as subject matter experts, by luminaries and exceptional leaders over time; 3) standards weren't just developed by associations; 4) these professional standards are an incredible, validated and invaluable body of work; 5) we must take off the competitive lens as professional standards are examined and developed; 6) these standards, regardless of genesis, are the profession's standards; 7) we must not forget to lean on the work of the people who brought us here, and not recreate past work; 8) he acknowledges the current MSCA collaboration on intelligence fusion centers; 9) the body of work on correctional fusion centers has begun; 10) it is focused on needs in jails, prisons, community supervision, and public law enforcement. He concluded his comments by thanking the Chair and Board for his time.

Chair Morgan responded that he is always appreciative of ACA and Greene's collaborative spirit. He commented that no one is looking to eliminate professional standards or the hard work that has gone into them over the years. He continued that NIC should bring together the many federal agencies to review detention inspections. He noted that the goal is to harmonize the inspection process, not to seek an exception to standards. The Chair concluded that Executive Director Rob Green provided sage advice, and it is appreciated.

Annual Chair Electoral Process

Chair Morgan recognized DFO LeMaster to administer the next agenda item, the annual chair electoral process. DFO LeMaster announced that the chair electoral process has been initiated, with the first order of business to seek nominations, seconds, and nomination acceptance. Chair Morgan recognized Vice Chair Broderick to run the nomination process, as he recused himself as the current Chair. Vice Chair Broderick asked for chair nominations from voting Board members. Member May nominated Gabriel Morgan to continue as the Board's chair. Member Tuthill seconded the nomination for Gabriel Morgan to continue as chair. Vice Chair Broaderick asked for further nominations. Noting no further nominations, Vice Chair Broderick asked nominee Gabriel Morgan if he accepted the chair nomination. He stated, "I do". The Vice Chair moved to a voice vote, as there is an unopposed chair nomination on the floor. The Vice Chair stated, "All those in favor of Gabe remaining as our chair, signify by stating 'aye". Those opposed say "nay".

Hearing no nays, the Vice Chair stated, “The voice vote is unanimous for Gabriel Morgan to remain Chair.”¹¹ The Vice Chair returned the floor to the newly reelected Chair, Gabriel Morgan.

Chair Morgan thanked the Board for their trust and confidence and pledged to carry out their will and support the best interests of the National Institute of Corrections. He related that, as he has shared many times, and as a Sheriff for 20 years, he stands on the shoulders of the National Institute of Corrections, because he has used every bit of resources from NIC for his success. Chair Morgan concluded that he is living proof of the work that NIC does.

Public Comment Period

Chair Morgan recognized DFO LeMaster to assist him in administering the public comment period. Chair Morgan recognized general public member Michael Stewart for his comments. Mr. Stewart related that he was very impressed with the proceedings and for his opportunity to observe the meeting. Chair Morgan thanked Mr. Stewart for his interest and hopes that he can attend future Board meetings.

Next, the Chair asked if additional association partners would like to comment briefly on the meeting’s proceedings thus far. DFO LeMaster related that Veronica Cunningham, representing the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA), is attending by phone and would like to comment. Chair Morgan recognized Ms. Cunningham for her comments. She related that 1) she wanted to say thank you for the well-directed meeting; 2) she is appreciative of the professionalism and conversation; 3) APPA would like to support any celebrations of NIC’s 50th anniversary, as it is also APPA’s 50th anniversary of NIC; 4) NIC is welcome at the summer New York conference for a celebratory event; and 5) APPA wishes to support NIC in any way it can. Chair Morgan responded that that is appreciated, and asked SDD Brown to note the offer.

Closing Remarks

The Chair offered the Board, including ex officio members, an opportunity for closing comments. Hearing none, the Chair recognized Director LoBuglio for his closing comments. Director LoBuglio thanked the Board and NIC’s valued ex officio federal partners for their time and commitment to NIC. He related that this has been another great meeting in maximizing the voices of our advisory board and our association partners. He continued that he is thankful for the candid feedback, the offers of assistance, and support as we pursue the three new proposals. Director LoBuglio said that these are three significant proposals, and that there are many other projects division chiefs and staff are also working on that we look forward to briefing you on in the future. He remarked that the NIC Advisory Board is indispensable to NIC’s mission to improve corrections in the United States. He recognized all those who attended and indicated that NIC values all contributions and prides itself on listening to all views and opinions that can help its mission. Director LoBuglio returned the floor to Chair Morgan.

¹¹ Seven voting Board members voted “aye” on the unopposed chair nomination. Chair Morgan was reelected by a 7-0 vote.

Chair Morgan thanked NIC staff for their hard work and asked all present to have patience as NIC continues to experience changes and transitions. His hope is for things to settle, leading to enhanced mission energy and focus.

Vice Chair Broderick added a reminder that the next meeting is tentatively scheduled for July 15 – 16, 2025, and to mark your calendars. Chair Morgan thanked the Vice Chair for the timely reminder.

Meeting Adjournment

DFO LeMaster officially adjourned the NIC Advisory Board meeting at 3:45 pm ET.

Association Partner Updates Submitted Before the Meeting for Inclusion in Meeting Minutes

American Probation and Parole Association (APPA)

APPA proudly marks its **50th anniversary** — a half-century of advancing excellence in community supervision. To commemorate this milestone, we will convene our 50th Annual Training Institute in New York City from August 24–27, 2025, featuring an extra-special program designed to celebrate this historic occasion.

Throughout the year, APPA is amplifying its voice on behalf of the more than 90,000 probation and parole practitioners nationwide. Central to our efforts is the launch of a long-overdue **National Public Awareness Campaign for Community Supervision**. This campaign toolkit — which will be updated regularly — provides ready-to-use talking points, promotional ideas, and guidance for engaging community organizations and media outlets. Its purpose is to spotlight the critical role probation and parole officers play in both the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

Most Americans recognize the contributions of police officers, judges, and correctional staff, yet few understand the distinct responsibilities of community supervision professionals. Too often, probation and parole officers are mistakenly equated with law enforcement. This year, we urge every agency — and every individual practitioner — to seize the opportunity to introduce themselves, educate their communities, and share stories of how community supervision transforms lives and enhances public safety. We also call upon our partners in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to join us in elevating awareness. By collaborating with local probation and parole jurisdictions, all can help ensure the public fully appreciates the value and impact of this vital field.

International Community Justice Association (ICJA)

ICJA's Technical Guidance Assistant Program (TGAP) proposes to work in 8 communities in the United States to develop assistance with all entities working at the local level with criminal justice-involved individuals, providing collaboration training, developing local integrating models, and providing evidence-informed training culminating in a final toolkit for communities. The TA will target holistic service areas including housing, behavioral health, residential community corrections programs, and workforce development. We are targeting foundations and funders at this time. ICJA would appreciate feedback from association partners, along with any funding insights.

ICJA asks you to join them at their upcoming Research Conference, August 20 – 22, 2025, in Denver, CO. See more at <https://www.icjaonline.org/>