

# OFFICER LIAISON PROJECT NEWSLETTER

MARCH 14, 2018

## Join the Officer Liaison Project

For over a year now, the Officer Liaison Project has been in existence. This was started in the hopes of opening up communication between Officers and staff that would be considered the “boots on the ground” and the Commissioner’s Office. We were working towards having a web page put up, however it was discovered that it would be more efficient to put out a newsletter. So here is Newsletter #1.

Please feel free to share your input, ask questions, give ideas, and be a part of this communication. If your Institution does not have a Liaison Officer and you are interested in being one, let Officer McCarty know @ [aprelle.mccarty@alaska.gov](mailto:aprelle.mccarty@alaska.gov).

## Tanana Chiefs Conference

### Sobering Center - FBX

Read about this great project in Fairbanks! The Tanana Chiefs Conference Sobering Center has opened up (click link to read the article <http://www.webcenter11.com/content/news/Sobering-Center-brings-new-hope-to-Fairbanks-struggle-with-alcoholism-456019573.html> ) and has made a big impact for FCC.

In January, 119 people were brought in on a Title 47 (people who are not criminally charged, but are too intoxicated to fend for themselves) and then the Center opened up and in February the number dropped to 8. That is a lot of stress and work off of Corrections Officers. Many times these people can be combative, placing staff at risk and ending up with new charges for the intoxicated individual because of this combative behavior. It sounds like FCC staff is pretty happy about this Center and the relief it has provided!

## DOC Industries

If you have not already read about it, there is also a push to get Alaska DOC Industries going again. (Click link for article: <https://www.adn.com/politics/alaska-legislature/2018/03/12/new-bill-would-put-inmates-back-to-work-in-alaska-prisons/> ) It has the potential to be a great incentive for prisoners and teach them a trade as well.

## Housing Woes

There is a need for housing those who are getting out of prison. There are halfway houses but the goal is to find a way to house fewer people together. When you have a bunch of people living together who have the same problems, it can lead to issues, whereas if you have a few people with a common goal living together, there is usually more success.

Some different avenues are being looked at with the idea possibly being that these people would still be under DOC custody, with those who really mess up being sent back to prison and those with small failures being given some leeway. There will be more on this as things move along.

## DOC Budget

The budget for DOC is an ongoing topic. So far it does not look like any dramatic deduction in the Department. We are about \$21 million upside down this year; our proposed budget is hoped be an increase of \$21 million to cover that deficit. These are fixed costs (clothing, food, medical, etc.) and cover things that cannot just be stopped

## Wildwood – Pilot Program

Wildwood Correctional Center is piloting a program and I asked Superintendent McCloud if she would be willing to say a few words about it. Here is what she had to say, “We started a few weeks ago. We pulled in each staff member in building 10 (sentenced building) and explained the Norway process and our expectations. The process involved letting

as in other departments.

The thought was that the new bill (SB 91) was going to reduce the prisoner population by at least 1,100. The reality is that this number is only at about 500, hence the \$21 million gap. Around \$10 million would go towards prisoner population/institution services and around \$10 million would go towards the medical side. Mr. Williams has stated that he is committed to not cutting any more money from the Institutions budgets and agrees that more staff is needed.

It should be noted that there are a number of vacancies in the Field Probation Officer's ranks. This has caused less money to be spent, but it is not something done on purpose and the Department is trying to fill those vacancies.

If you know someone who would be a good candidate for this job, have them check out Workplace Alaska.

correctional staff know that they had 5 inmates to speak with during their work week. Nothing major, just talk...how are they doing, what kinds of programs would they like to see at WCC...that kind of stuff. We also asked that they drop a few notes in our database on when they spoke to the inmate and a small blurb on what was discussed. So far it is working out well, we check our database weekly to make sure staff are get this done. Both Assistant Superintendents and myself will also take part in this process.”

A thank you to her for taking the time to give us some insight into this pilot program. And a shout out to those willing to take a leap of faith to try something new!

**~Closing Words~**

The idea behind some changes in the works in regards to dealing with prisoners, is to do what we, as the Department of Corrections, can to make the state of Alaska a safer place to live. If the prison system can become a safer place for both staff and prisoners, it is a win/win situation.

Now is the time to get in on the discussion of where Alaska DOC is heading and what can be done to reduce the recidivism rate. As Correctional Staff, your input is valuable as you work closely with prisoners and see what practices bring about good results and what brings about more violence. We are seeing a direct result of the prison gangs violence and drug trafficking in our state and hoping it changes or gets better by itself is not going to work.

If you would like, email your thoughts and input to one of the Liaison Officers and then we can share it with the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner. The whole idea and goal of the OLP is to open up communication, get ideas flowing, try to tap into more of the resource that is us. Be a part of the conversation.

**Your Fellow Liaison Officers:**

- Bailey, Kraig (KCC)
- Banachowicz, Deirdre (P.O. GCCC)
- Bottoms, Chris (GCCC)
- Courtright, Paul (HMCC)
- Denbow, Timothy (WWCC)
- Hansen, Rob (WWCC)
- Hawley, Ginger (HMCC)
- Johnson, Julie (FCC)
- Johnson, Derek (LCCC)
- Land, Heather (P.O. Anchorage)
- Leniear, Stephen (GCCC)
- Lust, Adam (Anvil Mt.)
- Mapes, John (HMCC)
- McCarty, Aprelle (SCCC)
- Reed, Rebecca (Field P.O. Anchorage)
- Sears, Stacy (FCC)
- Simpson, Virginia (MSPT)
- Slater, Rick (LCCC)
- Stanley, Matt (SCCC)
- Tweedy, Regan (P.O. LCCC)