

Justice Reinvestment Interim Committee

Wednesday October 30, 2013

Featured Panelists

Dustin “Dusty” Johnson serves as chief of staff to Governor Dennis Daugaard. In that role he serves as chief operating officer for much of state government and as a top advisor to the Governor. Prior to joining the Governor’s Office, Dusty served on the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission for six years, where he was the state’s top energy and telecommunications regulator. He was first elected statewide to the PUC in 2004 and was re-elected in 2010.

Dusty has also served as a senior policy advisor to Governor Mike Rounds, and has worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture and for local governments in the Kansas City area.

Dusty has a bachelor’s degree in political science from the University of South Dakota, a master’s degree in public administration from the University of Kansas, and in 1998 was named a Harry S. Truman Scholar. He is on the board of directors for the W.O. Farber Fund and for Abbott House (a residential treatment center for girls), and served on the Attorney General’s Open Government Task Force and as an adjunct professor at Dakota Wesleyan University.

He has a passion for solving problems, public service, reading, and sports, but nothing is more important to Dusty than his family. He, his wife Jacquelyn, and their sons Maxwell, Benjamin, and Owen make their home in Mitchell.

Jim Seward was appointed General Counsel for South Dakota by Governor Dennis Daugaard in 2010. A former active duty soldier, prosecutor, defense attorney, judicial system employee and owner and partner in a small business and of a general practice law firm, Jim has lived and worked across South Dakota and around the world. While obtaining his undergraduate degree at the University of South Dakota and achieving a Phi Beta Kappa selection, Jim was also elected to the Vermillion City Council. During law school, Jim accepted an appointment to complete another term which had been vacated. He later completed over five years as the elected prosecutor and chief legal counsel for Butte County South Dakota.

Jim’s sense of justice was significantly affected by his time patrolling the German border as an M1 tank driver and gunner near the end of the Cold War. Following his active service and Juris Doctorate degree, Jim received a direct commission to become a JAG officer with the U.S. Army and South Dakota National Guard. Jim’s unit was deployed to Afghanistan for a one year tour; May 2004-May 2005. After flying legal missions across this vast land and prosecuting Courts Martial cases in the desert for the United States Government as Trial Counsel of a 2000 person task force, Jim returned home to South Dakota to resume his duties as Butte County State’s Attorney. He was awarded the Bronze Star in recognition of meritorious service in Operation Enduring Freedom V. Jim is a graduate of the U.S. Army’s Command and General Staff College, 12 month masters level, Intermediate Level Education Course. Now a Lt. Colonel, he continues to serve his state and nation in the National Guard.

In addition to his normal General Counsel duties, Governor Dugaard asked Jim to serve as Chair of the workgroup that led to the 2013 South Dakota Public Safety Improvement Act. He now serves as Chair of the statutorily created Oversight Council obligated to ensure proper implementation and measure performance and outcomes.

Greg Sattizahn was appointed State Court Administrator by the South Dakota Supreme Court in September 2013. Prior to his appointment Mr. Sattizahn served as the legal counsel for the South Dakota court system and as the Director of Policy and Legal Services. Mr. Sattizahn has worked as a staff attorney for the South Dakota Supreme Court; a litigation associate with a private law firm and began his legal career as a law clerk for the Honorable Justice Richard W. Sabers. Greg attended law school at the University of South Dakota where he graduated as a member of the Sterling Honor Society and was an editor on the Law Review. Prior to law school he obtained a Political Science degree from Iowa State University.

Senator Craig Tieszen was elected to the South Dakota Senate in 2008. He is currently serving his third term, and is the Judiciary Committee Chair, as well as the Corrections Commission Chair. He spent 32 years in law enforcement with the Rapid City Police Department, finishing his last 7 years as the Chief of Police until his retirement in 2007. Senator Tieszen holds a Bachelor's Degree in Chemical Engineering, and a Master's Degree in Criminal Justice.

Sheriff Kevin Thom began his law enforcement career with the Ward County Sheriff's Department in Minot, North Dakota in 1978. In 1982 he was hired by the South Dakota Division of Criminal Investigation as a Special Agent with duty stations in Aberdeen, Rapid City and Pierre. At DCI Thom served as Drug Task Force Supervisor, West River DCI Supervisor, Training Administrator and in 2003 became Director. Retiring from DCI in 2006, Thom was hired by the City of Rapid City in 2007 as Community Resources Director and was responsible for Human Resources, Information & Technology, Code Enforcement and the Community Development Block Grant Program.

Sheriff Kevin Thom was sworn in on January 1, 2011. The Sheriff's Office has four divisions, Law Enforcement, Jail, Juvenile Services Center and the City/County Alcohol and Drug Program. The Sheriff's Office has 372 FTEs. Sheriff Thom also serves as Coroner for Pennington County. Sheriff Thom has a Bachelors' Degree in Criminal Justice from Minot State University and a Master of Public Administration Degree from the University of South Dakota.