

# JJAG Minutes 6/16/2023

**Members Present:** Ned Chester (Chair), Jill Ward (Vice Chair), Christine Thibeault (DOC), Megan Welter (DOE), Todd Landry (DHHS), Bishop Steven Coleman, Bonnie Porta, Atlee Reilly, Jonathan Shapiro, Chris Northrop, Chris Bicknell, Regina Phillips, Kelly Rackler, Tanya Pierson, Tessa Mosher, Morgan Hynd, Jay Philbrick, Megan Anderson, Elizabeth Ward Saxl (Melissa Martin attended for Elizabeth).

**Members Absent:** Judge Sarah Churchill, Renee Bernard, La Michael Gildersleeve, Lt Patrick Hood (DPS), Jacinda Goodwin, Brody Haverly-Johndro, Sienna Dana, Abier Ibrahim, Zubeyda Shute, Ladi Nzeyimana

**JJAG Staff Present:** Linda Barry Potter (JJ Specialist and Compliance Monitor); Anwar Whiting (RED/DOC Credible Messenger Coordinator)

**DOC Staff Present:** Tara Chiasson (Juvenile Community Corrections Officer Region 2); Heidi L. Strassberg-Bersani (Juvenile Division Support Specialist)

**Public Attendees:** Swathi Sivasubramanian, Luc Nya, Betsy Boardman, Nick Kidwell, Alice Preble, Doran Wright, Grace Eddy, Gabriel Siwady, Ashley Pesek

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**Call to Order:** 9:05am (via zoom and in-person at Maine Law)

## **Welcome & Introductions**

**May Meeting Minutes:** Corrections to the May Meeting Minutes: \$9,500 not 9,500k, Bishop Steve Coleman's name was misspelled (Steve not Steven). Approval of the 5/19/23 Meeting Minutes as amended. Motion to approve by Christine Thibeault; Tanya Pierson seconded. **Adopted 19-0 with one abstention.**

## **JJ Specialist Report (Linda Barry Potter):**

*Budget* – No changes to budget since May meeting. First invoices have come in for the BIPOC youth community awards. There was a request for a 5k grant to support a family that fosters system-involved youth build an extension on their house. Habitat for Humanity Hancock is currently funding the project but the family is looking for additional funds. There was discussion that JJAG does not normally do direct funding to individuals in need and that it would be more appropriate for this to go through the Regional Care Teams. Executive Committee will circle back with WINGs and Region 3 Team to determine best next steps.

*Compliance Monitoring Update* – None.

*CJJ Conference Report Out – May 24-26 in Washington, DC* – The general consensus is that the conference went very well. The JJAG representatives participated in Hill Day and delivered information about the JJAG and our work to Maine's Congressional delegation and advocated for continued JJDPA funding. Thank you notes were sent out to the Hill offices after the conference. Note to include Legislative Committee in this communication going forward. The conference workshops were interesting and informative. Our youth members got to connect with other youth members.

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*CJJ/Annie E Casey Foundation Probation Reform Training – June 21 in Baltimore, MD* – Team to attend (Linda, Christine, Jill, Tanya, Tara Chiasson) – Christine to solicit input (questions & ideas) from staff prior to the training.

*CJJ Youth Conference – July 30-August 1 in Tacoma, Washington* – Swathi Sivasubramanian, Zubeyda Shute, and another non-JJAG youth applicant applied for scholarships to attend (including airfare and lodging), the request for registration fees will come back to JJAG.

## **Committee Reports:**

***Executive Committee (Ned Chester & Jill Ward):*** Discussion about decision to separate JJ Specialist and Compliance Monitor (CM) back into two separate jobs. During the pandemic these roles were combined into one job. The committee would like to return to the long-standing practice of having these be two separate jobs to ramp up onsite compliance monitoring and better adhere to JJAG standards. Federal JJAG funds can cover the CM position. JJAG and DOC will manage the hiring process.

***RED/DMC Committee (Regina Phillips & Chris Northrop):*** There was a guest speaker at the last committee meeting who discussed the importance of looking at nine or 13 points of contact with the system for determining R/ED in the system (rather than the 5 that are currently required by OJJDP). Committee to discuss R/ED data collection and the possible request to fund a new report at the next meeting.

***Governance Committee (Ned Chester & Bonnie Porta):*** The committee is working on filling opening slots on the Board. Noted again that we are lacking youth members and youth and family with lived experience. Discussion of engaging youth at Long Creek. Also noted next committee meeting will focus on drafting grants/RFA policy.

***Legislative Committee (Atlee Reilly & Elizabeth Ward Saxl):*** The committee will take the summer off but would like time in the October or November JJAG meeting to debrief, provide information and brainstorm about the legislative session. There were two bills that JJAG weighed in on in the 1<sup>st</sup> session: LD 148 and LD 433, both are now dead. DOC has a bill to create juvenile specific training for corrections officers, it is in committee at the time of the Board meeting.

***Systems Improvement Committee (Jill Ward & Luc Nya):*** Jill, Morgan, Bonnie and Alice are meeting on June 28<sup>th</sup> to review applications for the Community-Based Alternatives to System-Involvement RFA.

Discussion and update on the Youth Network Grant and request to extend the grant for another year with 50K in matching funds (matching DOC's contribution). Motion to approve by Bonnie Porta; Christine Thibeault seconded. **Approved 19-0 with no abstentions.**

Jonathan Shapiro gave an update on adolescent development/teen brain training for law enforcement and requested the Board approve up to 60K in funding for Strategies for Youth's two-day law enforcement training to be held in each of DOC's three regions (southern, central, northern). Each training will train 35 officers. There may be a follow-up request for a 2<sup>nd</sup> train the trainer grant, but will see how these trainings go first. Motion to approve the request by Tanya Pierson; Ned Chester Seconded. **Approved 19-0 with no abstentions.**

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**Youth Council (Jay Philbrick):** Youth Council is organizing a two day retreat this summer (August 18-19) for youth to connect, organize and decide how they want to be involved with JJAG. There is discussion of creating a listserv or other mode of communication to connect with system involved youth around the state.

## **Agency Updates:**

**DOC (Christine Thibeault):** There are currently 28 youth in long creek: 1 female, 11 committed males and 16 detained males. DOC is seeing shorter commitments: 4 months to 10 months, which makes it harder to do an aftercare plan for these youth.

**DHHS/OCFS (Todd Landry):** ICWA was upheld. [https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/22pdf/21-376\\_7148.pdf](https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/22pdf/21-376_7148.pdf). Maine was ranked 12<sup>th</sup> in the Annie E Casey Foundation annual Kids Count report. <https://assets.aecf.org/m/databook/2023-KCDB-profile-ME.pdf>

**DOE (Megan Welter):** DOE has been monitoring the number of questions before the legislature regarding student mental health, which could affect youth justice as well. Discussion of strategy DOE is investing in in ~90 schools to improve school climate. Employing the “BARR approach,” a strengths-based educational system that provides schools with a comprehensive approach to meeting the academic, social, and emotional needs of all students through the power of relationships. See more at [www.barrcenter.org](http://www.barrcenter.org). It was noted that Disability Rights Maine has seen an increase in disability exclusions and expulsions, so hope this initiative helps with that.

**DPS:** No updates.

**Judicial Branch:** No updates.

**Adjourned 10:56am.**