

JJAG Minutes 9/15/2023

Members Present (in person): Ned Chester (Chair), Jill Ward (Vice Chair), Chris Bicknell, Regina Phillips, Abeir Ibrahim, Bishop Steven Coleman, Renee Bernard.

(via zoom): Christine Thibeault (DOC), Todd Landry (DHHS), Judge Sarah Churchill, Bonnie Porta, Chris Northrop, Jacinda Goodwin, Jonathan Shapiro, La Michael Gildersleeve, Kelly Rackler, Tanya Pierson, Tessa Mosher, Megan Anderson, Jay Philbrick, Samantha Fenderson (DOL), Melissa Martin (replacement nominee).

Members Absent: Atlee Reilly, Megan Welter (DOE), Morgan Hynd, Brody Haverly-Johndro, Zubeyda Shute, Ladi Nzeyimana, Sierra Dana.

JJAG Staff Present: Linda Barry Potter (JJ Specialist and Compliance Monitor) via zoom; Anwar Whiting (RED/DOC Credible Messenger Coordinator) in person.

DOC Staff Present: Heidi L. Strassberg-Bersani (Juvenile Division Support Specialist) in person.

Public Attendees: Swathi Sivasubramanian, Bruce King, Anna Schmidt, Alice Preble, Sarah Branch

Call to Order: 9:05am (via zoom and in person at New Beginnings, 134 College Street, Lewiston)

Welcome & Introductions (Ned Chester)

July Meeting Minutes (Ned Chester): Motion to approve by Regina Phillips; Christine Thibeault seconded. **Adopted 14-0 with one abstention.**

JJ Specialist Report (Linda Barry Potter):

Budget & Grants Update – Received extension from OJJDP for FY19 grant to allow time to spend down the \$45K in funds on the two remaining contracts (MIO and Mindbridge) that are obligated, but not yet spent. Requested a similar extension for FY18 to have time to spend down remaining \$22K in obligated funds for that grant (Houlton Band of Maliseets) that was delayed due to COVID. These requests give us until 9/30/24 to spend down the balance(s) on these contracts and once that is done our FY18 and FY19 grants will be complete/closed. See full budget report for remaining balances in the FY20, FY21 and FY22 grants. FY23 solicitation was submitted on August 21, 2023 and has been accepted by our federal program manager and is moving through the approval process at OJJDP.

Compliance Monitoring Update – Compliance Monitoring report was also submitted in August.

CJJ Annual R/ED Conference – Scheduled for October 30-31 in Louisville, KY. Chris Northrop and Renee Bernard will attend. Info and draft agenda can be found [here](#).

Committee Reports:

Executive Committee (Ned Chester & Jill Ward): Compliance Monitor (CM) position was posted and closed on 09/14/23. Christine and Ryan Andersen (former CM) from DOC will be on the hiring committee and there is a request for two JJAG members to serve on it as well. Candidates meeting the minimum requirements have been passed on to Christine and will be scheduled for interviews. Interviewers should plan to be in person and allow 45 minutes per interview. Dates to be determined. Reviewed the rest of the 2024 Board Meeting schedule, including request to have December 15 meeting in Long Creek.

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RED/DMC Committee (Regina Phillips & Chris Northrop): No Committee meeting in August. Discussion of JJAG and DOC trainings coming to a close. Last two JJAG sessions with Dr. Carter will be 10/20 (remote) and the last in person will be after the November Board meeting on 11/17. Next Mindbridge meeting is 10/19. Question asked about new employees getting access to the training. Next Committee meeting will be 10/10 at 4:30pm.

Governance Committee (Ned Chester & Bonnie Porta): The committee presented a draft grants policy. There was discussion and some suggested revisions. Committee will incorporate feedback and recirculate to members for review in order to finalize at the next board meeting. Update on new members: Aaron Turcotte is new designee for DPS and Samantha Fenderson from DOL. Tim Daluca (Houlton Police Chief), Nickole Wesley (possible youth/impacted member) were raised as possible nominees who have served on the JJAG before. Discussion about needing to engage individuals with lived experience/from impacted communities and youth members. Will need to revisit meeting schedule to do this effectively and should consider alternative meeting times beginning in 2024 based on input from Youth Council in particular.

Legislative Committee (Atlee Reilly & Elizabeth Ward Saxl): The committee has resumed meeting in September and requests about 30 minutes at the October Board meeting to go over the legislative session.

Systems Improvement Committee (Jill Ward & Luc Nya): Three awards went out for the Community-Based Alternatives to System-Involvement RFA (Aroostook Community Action, Augusta Boys & Girls Club and Midcoast Community Collaborative with Trekkers as the fiscal sponsor). Committee discussed next priorities including reissuing the BIPOC youth RFA and an a RFA on youth substance use prevention with the hope of aligning with other efforts of the Opioid Task Force, etc. Strategies for Youth proposal is being worked on. Locations in each of the 3 DOC regions are being finalized and outreach and recruitment for the training is on-going. Interest by some hospitals/residential providers in having their security trained as well; as many as can be accommodated will be. Need to start thinking about the next 3-year plan which is due next spring. Committee will work on a timeline to do this planning, including providing updates around agency spending priorities, to determine where JJAG can best contribute. Looking to have those updates from agencies at the November meeting.

Youth Council (Jay Philbrick): Youth Council had a retreat in August and is developing a work plan for the year. The Council would like to present its mission and related work plan at the October meeting. Council meets month on Tuesday evenings.

Agency Updates:

DOC (Christine Thibeault): Update on activities pursuant to LD 155 – 1) work group in the Children’s Cabinet to look at the best practices around the provision of Juvenile Services and 2) development of a strategic plan with OCFS/DHHS. Hope to have a presentation on plans ready for the December JJAG meeting. Data dashboard required by LD 155 is nearly complete and hope to have it up and running in November, ahead of the February 2024 deadline. It will include real time data on race, gender, age, diversion, probation, detention and commitment.

Probation transformation efforts coming out of the AECF workshop in Baltimore continue. DOC is looking at gift cards for incentive-based probation, which is proving administrative challenging. Also looking at reforming the probation checklist to make it more incentive-based and individualized.

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Residential programs are challenging due in large part to staffing issues. Acer is now being looked at for boys (instead of girls) and Day One will not continue to provide services under the current contract at Unity Place. DOC is continuing to work with Day One to see what else can be done.

New Youth Corrections Officer training with increased content on youth development and restorative practices to be implemented starting October. Commissioner Liberty was a big help getting curriculum approved by the legislature to emphasize adolescent development and what does and doesn't work with youth.

There are currently 27 youth in long creek: 2 female (one detained and one committed), 25 male (14 detained and 11 committed).

DHHS/OCFS (*Todd Landry*): New work group established pursuant to LD 1003 to look at “no eject, no reject” policy and will report out in January. Update on the budget will be presented at November meeting.

DOE (*Megan Welter*): No updates.

DPS: No updates.

Judicial Branch: Judge Churchill described busy dockets and workforce shortage issues that are challenging and impact ability to give juvenile cases the appropriate/adequate time for consideration and processing.

Next meeting is October 20th (via zoom) at 9am.

Adjourned 10:58am.