

JJAG Minutes 02/16/2024

Members Present: Ned Chester (Chair), Jill Ward (Vice Chair), Atlee Reilly, Bishop Steven Coleman, Christine Thibeault (DOC), Megan Welter (DOE), Dean Bugaj (DHHS), Samantha Fenderson (DOL), Aaron Turcotte (DPS), Bonnie Porta, Morgan Hynd, Renee Bernard, Jonathan Shapiro, Kelly Rackler, Tanya Pierson, Tessa Mosher, Regina Phillips, Abeir Ibrahim, Chris Bicknell, Megan Anderson, Brody Haverly-Johndro, Melissa Martin (replacement nominee for Elizabeth Ward Saxl)

Members Absent: Chris Northrop, La Michael Gildersleeve, Judge Sarah Churchill, Jacinda Goodwin, Kelly Rackler, Renee Bernard, Zubeyda Shute, Ladi Nzeyimana, Sierra Dana, Jay Philbrick

JJAG Staff Present: Linda Barry Potter (JJ Specialist), Douglas Sanborn (Compliance Monitor), Anwar Whiting (RED/DOC Credible Messenger Coordinator), Heidi Strassberg-Bersani (Juvenile Division Support Specialist)

DOC Staff Present: Steve Labonte (RCA, Region 3), Julie Leavitt (JCCO), Kelly Hebert (JCCO), Sue Nee (RCA, Region 2), John Coyne (RCA, Region 1), Valerie Santagata (JCCO), Jason Mitchell (JCCO), Brooke Bowley (JCCO), Tara Chiasson (JCCO), Jake Riccardi (JCCO), Vic Vera (JCCO).

Public Attendees (via zoom): Betsy Boardman, Alice Preble, Doran Wright, Mary Lou Michael, Nick Kidwell, Luc Nya, Lisa Thurau

Call to Order: 9:02am (via zoom)

Welcome & Introductions (Ned Chester) – Welcome Aaron Turcotte new designee from DPS!

January Meeting Minutes (Ned Chester): Motion to approve as corrected by Christine Thibeault; Tanya Pierson seconded. **Adopted 17-0.**

JJ Specialist Report (Linda Barry Potter):

Budget & Grants Update – Budget now includes the FY23 Award; 18 Grants are active at this time. MIO extended their contract due date to 09/30/2024 to allow them more time to spend down their grant. R/ED Committee voted unanimously to renew the MEIRS Circle of Care grant for another year at \$25,000. Melissa O’Neal-Lowe is no longer the Director of Appointments in the Governor’s office it is now Joseph Boucher. One more JJAG member needed to fill out the Evaluator’s Group for the BIPOC-LGBTQ RFA going out soon (end of February). The time commitment is one 30-minute meeting; 8-hours to read and score applications. Thank you to Luc Nya, Abeir Ibrahim, and Renee Bernard for volunteering already.

Discussion about continued funding for the Regional Care Team (RCT) initiative. It was noted that MDOC is increasing its appropriation in FY24 and question for JJAG is whether we continue current funding or also increase it to match MDOC. Christine noted that MDOC will be asking other agencies at the next Children’s Cabinet meeting to contribute to the RCT initiative as it can serve youth in a prevention capacity before formal justice system-involvement occurs. Small group will follow-up and explore program expansion with partners (USM, Wings TOA), including funding needs, and bring information to the Systems Improvement Committee for consideration and to make a recommendation to the full Board.

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Grantee Presentation: Lisa Thureau from [Strategies for Youth](#) gave a presentation on their work to train law enforcement on adolescent development and approaches to policing the teen brain. They are hosting trainings in Maine in 2024. See slide presentation for additional information.

Save the Date: CJJ 2024 Annual Conference - [CJJ's 40th Anniversary: Engaging Youth to Turn Passion into Policy](#) is May 29-June 1, at the Grand Hyatt in Washington DC. Early bird registration is \$370 before 3/1/2024. Please let Linda know if you are interested in attending. OJJDP 2024 Annual Conference "Celebrating 50 years of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act (JJRA)" will be November 19-21, in Washington DC.

Compliance Monitoring Update – Doug continues to work on monitoring secure non-holding police departments and updating the Monitoring Universe for compliance with the JJDP core requirements. Mentoring field trip to Houton to visit and recertify the Aroostook County jail. He met with Ryan Shands and is looking forward to enrolling in the upcoming Compliance Monitoring Certificate course.

Agency Updates: As agencies gave comprehensive overviews of their plans for the next year and how they intersect with JJAG work there were no reports this month. Agencies are asked to consider if there are specific needs or gaps that JJAG could help with for the next meeting.

Committee Reports:

Executive Committee (Ned Chester & Jill Ward): Three-year planning process is on-going led by the Plan Writing Group. We will be talking with Dr. Carter at 10:30am today after the conclusion of the business meeting. \$5K grant request was made by MEIRS to fund stipends for to train civil legal advocates who will attend school hearings with youth and families and ensure understanding of the rules and consequences if any by the youth and the parents.

- Motion to approve grant request by Bonnie Porta. Seconded by Tanya Pierson. Adopted 19-0.

R/ED Committee (Regina Phillips & Chris Northrop): At the last Committee meeting the group voted to renew the MEIRS contract and reviewed the report from Mindbridge on Phase I of the MDOC DEI training. Request from the Committee to have Mindbridge come to the next JJAG meeting and provide the Board with a summary of the report before engaging in Phase II. TTA request to OJJDP for support in looking at community-based organizations and improving youth first contact with police is still pending. Continued interest in funding updated research on system disparities.

Systems Improvement Committee (Jill Ward & Luc Nya): Working with R/ED to release an RFA for community-based organizations working with marginalized communities. Linda is working on setting up the Strategies for Youth Trainings with interest from Rockland, Fairfield and Skowhegan. Committee will discuss request of JJAG for funds to support the RCTs and continue conversation about other RFA priorities, including restorative justice, mental health and substance use.

3-Year Plan Writing Group: Ned Chester, Jill Ward, Morgan Hynd, Bonnie Porta, Samantha Fenderson, Chris Northrop, and Renee Bernard are on the smaller writing group that is working closely with Dr. Carter and Linda between meetings to frame up and draft the next 3-year plan. The plan will need to be ready to submit to OJJDP in the spring. The group meets every other Tuesday from 7:30-9am. The full Board will be able to contribute during the monthly sessions scheduled to run after the regular Board meetings in March and April, generally from 11:30am until 2:30pm. This group is using the Padlet to store items being used in the 3-Year Plan writing. The full board is invited to look at these items, leave their own comments as well. Deadline for submitting contributions or input into the 3-Year Plan is 02/23/2024, as the next meeting is 02/27/2024 at 7:30 AM – 9 AM.

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Governance Committee (Ned Chester & Bonnie Porta): Need to focus on the system impacted youth or family member(s) that would be willing to serve. Still working on possibility of engaging youth at Long Creek. Sent two applications off to the Governor last week (Melissa Martin and Tim Deluca) along with a renewal request (Bonnie Porta) and an advisement from DHHS about new designee (Dean Bugaj).

Youth Council (Jay Philbrick): Trying to organize a meeting but it is very hard right now. Few members are responding to requests for meeting time, Linda and Jill will continue to try to work with Young People's Caucus to support the Youth Council. Also working to set meeting time with Dr Carter to have the Council contribute to the 3-year plan.

Legislative Committee (Atlee Reilly): Presentations to the CJPS Committee on 2/14/24 by Christine Thibeault re: MDOC and Jill Ward re: 2020 System Assessment. Committee also heard the following two bills: 1) LD 288: Passed out of committee- 20 million dollars for youth support services (transitional housing) to DHHS and LD 1779: Strengths-based needs assessments law enforcement to refer directly to DHHS recommended ONTP. Discussion about the hearing and objections to LD 1779. There were concerns about process and funding that could not be fully addressed in the work session, but seemed that there also might be more opportunity for discussion. The proposal is consistent with several recommendations in the system assessment around arrest and diversion. Committee will pull together a group of interested individuals who would like to discuss LD 1779 further.

Next meeting is March 15, 2024 at 9 AM.

Adjourned 10:32 AM.