

Commission on Racial & Ethnic Disparity in the Criminal Justice System

Connecticut Judicial Branch

Meeting Minutes

November 14, 2022

1:00 – 4:00

Hartford Community Court

Commission members present: Justice Lubbie Harper, Jr., (Chair), Werner Oyanadel (CWCSEO), Preston Tisdale (Governor), Claud Chong (Chief's Public Defender's designee), Patrick Ridenhour (Representative of the Municipal Police Chiefs), Sarah Eagan (Office of the Child Advocate), Denise Drummond (CWCSEO), Carleton Giles (BOPP), Monica Rams (DCF).

Non-Commission members present: Aileen Keays (UConn IMRP), Ken Barone (UConn IMRP), Irvine Peck's-Agaya (UConn IMRP), Andrew Clark (UConn IMRP), Troy Brown (Judicial/CSDD).

I. Welcome

- a. Meeting commenced at approx. 1:04pm.

II. Review and approve minutes from September meeting

- a. Motion to approve made by Preston Tisdale seconded by Carleton Giles, approved by unanimous vote.

III. Updates on other commissions, committees, and task forces

- a. *Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (JJPOC)*
 - a. Aileen read a summary statement from Tow Institute of Justice at UNH re: JJPOC's activities.
 - b. JJPOC is finalizing draft recommendations and addendums to last year's JJPOC Reports by the end of the week. The workgroups, and their respective areas of focus, are:
 - i. Incarceration Workgroup – commissary and re-entry
 - ii. Diversion Workgroup – Alternatives to Arrest and Raising the Minimum Age of Arrest
 - iii. Suspension & Expulsion Workgroup – use of suspension and expulsions in k-12 schools.
 - c. Last month, the JJPOC received a presentation from the Cross Agency Data Sharing Workgroup and Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division that provided a data landscape of our current youth justice system. Also received an update on the Equity Dashboard that will be launched on OPM's website next year.
 - d. This Thursday, JJPOC will receive the annual report from DOC and JBCSSD on their use of chemical agents and prone restraints, as well as a presentation from DCF on their respite beds.
- b. [CT Racial Profiling Prohibition Project](#) (CTRP3) – Ken Barone, IMRP
 - a. Advisory board is set to release its 2020 report by the end of the week. The board released its preliminary report last year, but found that

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Middletown had disparities that needed additional analysis to further understand that data. The final report includes that work.

- b. It was discovered that some officers within the state police falsified traffic stop data. A partial audit determined that falsified data was provided to the CTRP3 and, therefore, was factored into CTRP3's annual reporting. Some members of CTRP3 are now pushing for a full audit of all state police records, however, the full advisory board is not yet in agreement that a full audit is warranted. Mr. Barone will keep this Commission informed.
- c. [CT Sentencing Commission](#) (CSC) – Alex Tsarkov, IMRP
 - a. CSC is set to host a symposium co-sponsored by the University of Connecticut School of Law Center on Community Safety Policing and Inequality on November 17th at the University of Connecticut School of Law.
- d. [Police Transparency and Accountability Task Force](#) (PTATF) – Ken Barone, IMRP
 - a. Task Force issued its final report this year. PTATF no longer exists, but some legislative requirements and recommendations for study continue.
 - i. [911-211 study](#). In partnership with United Way 211, IMRP was tasked with studying a representative sample of existing 9-1-1 data to better understand what percentage of calls could be more appropriately directed to United Way 211. This analysis will also help inform the projected increase in calls that will be directed to 211 through incremental awareness, education, and training. The report is due in January. This study, in part, stems from issues raised during public dialogues by parents whose children were on the spectrum. Looking at calls pertaining to individuals on the spectrum will be a component of the study.
 1. Discussion – A study supported by the Office of the Child Advocate showed that in Danbury/Waterbury, there were over 200 calls to police from Pre-K to 8 schools. Most of those calls were for children with ASD. OCA is recommending a review of why school districts are calling 911 instead of 211. May include assessment of the cost of a call to 911 vs. 211.
 - ii. [School Resource Officers \(SRO\) Study](#). WCSU is leading a study which seeks to understand how many schools have SROs, review contractual agreements, reporting requirements, and their integration into the school's structure.

IV. Discussion of the CREDCJS conference on race and reimagining policing

- a. What work has been done in CT in recent years to improve policing? – Ken Barone

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- i. Police Accountability Bill had over 40 provisions, there are a lot of misunderstandings regarding qualified immunity. Officers are genuinely frightened that their personal property is in jeopardy if they must take lethal action, despite the homeowner's insurance threshold for liability remaining “malicious”, “willful”, and “wanton”, which is a high bar. Addressing misunderstandings about the law would be helpful, and then look at what could still be done. Three potential areas for focus:
 1. Tools that municipalities could consider adopting.
 2. What isn't working, and what is working that more should know about. What are the changes that these efforts seem to be producing?
 3. What else could be done that maybe hasn't been considered?
- ii. Get union level leadership, mid-management level officers, police officers, police leaders, and community leaders.
- iii. Further highlight some of the positive things that have happened, and progress made, including diversifying our police force and what additional tools can be considered to further diversify policing.
- iv. Lorenzo Boyd was a great keynote – keep him.
- b. Summary of conference planning and reasons for cancellation – Aileen Keays
 - i. Aileen led discussion exploring the current receptivity amongst law enforcement to examine the intersect of race and policing in-light of recent tragic events involving violence against officers, the ability of departments to send officers to an educational forum due to staffing shortages, the willingness of potential guests to attend an in-person event while COVID is still relatively uncertain, and Commissioners' perspectives on a format that is most likely to yield meaningful engagement.
- c. Conference Funding
 - i. Hartford Foundation for Public Giving is very interested in topics of race, etc., and gave CWCSEO funds for events. Hosted a series of events leading up to their conference and created the PSA. CWCSEO may be able to co-sponsor the event.
 - ii. State budget has surplus; maybe a time to return to the legislature to request funding support for the commission.
 - iii. See if CT Mirror would be interested in partnering. CT Mirror held a conference recently at Sacred Heart.

V. Other business

- a. Biennial Report
 - i. Draft report is ready. Will be shared electronically with request for feedback/corrections, etc., electronically, and then during January meeting will vote.

VI. Meeting adjournment

- a. Meeting adjourned at approx. 3:30pm.

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2023 Meeting Schedule

January 09th

March 13th

May 08th

July 10th

September 11th

November 13th